

Family Handbook

2011-2012



Morris School

129 West St.

Lenox, MA 01240

413-637-5570

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Morris School Family Handbook! The purpose of this book is to provide a reference for parents and students and answer a variety of questions that may come up as members of our school community. Morris is the only public elementary school serving the town of Lenox. We have about 340 students in grades PK through 5. About 20% of these students attend Morris through the program of School Choice and reside in neighboring towns and school districts. Historically, resident and choice enrollment has allowed us to staff three sections of each grade.

The school information in this handbook is organized into two main sections: **SECTION I:** pages 1-27, contains information specific to Morris School. Section I contains information about our program and the day to day functioning of the school. **SECTION II:** pages 28-59, contains important notices from the school and district about parents' rights, district policies, and compliance with state and federal requirements. Parents probably won't refer to this section too often, but we do ask that you review this information as you look through the handbook. This handbook ends with an index that will help you quickly find any information you seek.

We at Morris are proud of our school. It is a true community of learning and a place where we work together to solve problems. If questions remain after reviewing this handbook, please call. We're happy to answer your questions and look forward to working with you to make your child's school experience a fruitful one.

Timothy Lee, Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

The Morris School is committed to providing a wide continuum of opportunities which value individuals, maximize both skills and knowledge, enhance self-esteem, and produce responsible and life-long learners.

GOALS

* To provide the opportunity for all students to develop and communicate the skills and techniques necessary for critical thinking, **responsible** problem solving, and **decision-making**.

* To ensure that each student will acquire **multiple literacy and numeracy skills** including those necessary to enable them to communicate effectively through written and spoken language.

To provide assistance for each student to acquire the **essential life skills** to be a responsible community member.

* To foster **respect and consideration for self and others** as well as a sense of pride for their school community.

To develop a **partnership with parents** by initiating and maintaining an active cooperative alliance with parents on educational issues, marked by attentiveness to parents' concerns and needs, nonjudgmental support of parents' efforts to nurture their children, and inclusion of parents in the learning process of their children, viewing parents as essential partners in that process.

* To have each school be a physically and emotionally safe environment where students want to be and where they are able to develop a spirit of ownership and a sense of belonging. To develop this **sense of community**, we need to promote self-respect and self-discipline and respect for others in the community, and be sensitive to and tolerant of the differences in each other.

* To ensure that we are providing **equal access and equality of opportunity** for all students in terms of staffing, programs, and resources.

SECTION I MORRIS SCHOOL GENERAL INFORMATION

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2011, ALL VISITORS MUST USE THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM TO ENTER THE SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

DAILY SCHEDULES

Children who do not ride the school bus should arrive at school no earlier than 8:20. Classes begin at 8:40 and children are dismissed beginning at 3:10.

Kindergarten sessions are as follows:

- Extended-day session - 8:40-1:25
- Full-day session - 8:40-3:10

TARDINESS AND ABSENTEEISM

Children are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:40. It is the responsibility of the parent and student to see that the student arrives at school on time. We do not count the student tardy if he or she rides the bus and the bus arrives late. In cases of frequent tardiness, the parent will be notified.

When your child is sick or is going to be absent from school, **please call the school by 8:30 a.m.** We try to call parents of all children who are absent in the interests of the safety of the children.

RECESS PERIODS

All children have a fifteen-minute morning recess period and approximately a thirty-five minute recess/lunch period. During inclement weather the children have indoor recess. The paraprofessionals determine whether the children have outdoor play. Please dress your children in appropriate clothing for changes in weather conditions. We use a temperature of 15°F. (either ambient temperature or wind chill temperature) as the determinant as to whether recess will be held outdoors or indoors.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

All Lenox Public Schools have a hot lunch program set up under the National School Lunch Program and administered through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education. School lunch menus are announced daily on the local radio stations, posted on the school website, and published in the *Berkshire Eagle*. Students receive menus monthly.

Applications for free and reduced price lunches are sent home with every student during the first week of school. If a family wishes for their children to participate and feels their family income is within the eligibility guidelines, they should send their completed application to the Superintendent's

Office via their child's classroom teacher. Parents will be notified of their children's eligibility within ten (10) days.

COLLECTION OF LUNCH MONEY

Payment for lunch or milk is made on Mondays for at least a week at a time. Parents are encouraged to pay for longer periods. Checks are accepted as payment. Each student has a debit card which is scanned after he/she purchases lunch or milk each day. Monday collecting is a bit hectic but allows for much quicker lunch counts and less disruption in the classrooms on the other days of the week. **Please be advised that the Morris School Lunch is a pay-ahead program.** Account balance statements are sent home with each report card. However, parents may call at any time to check balances. Parents of students whose lunch accounts are in arrears will be so advised and children may be provided an alternative lunch if the balance is not made positive after repeated notices.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

STUDENT RELEASE PROCEDURE

In emergency situations where it is necessary for your child to leave school during the day, he/she will be excused by the classroom teacher. A parent or an authorized adult must call for the child at the Principal's Office. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than yourself, please send a signed note or call the Principal's Office. We cannot release your child otherwise.

ADMISSION AND TRANSFER OF STUDENTS

All children entering the Morris School will register at the Elementary Principal's Office. Before entering, proof of immunization must be presented and reviewed by the school nurse. Pupils will ordinarily be placed with other children of the same grade level but may be placed in another group by the Principal with the approval of the Superintendent.

If you are planning to move from Lenox, please notify the Principal by phone or by note. The school office needs to know your new address, school to be attending, and date of leaving. The Elementary Principal's secretary is in charge of sending school records to your child's new school and needs a parent's signature for permission to do so.

EARLY RELEASE DAYS PARENT CONFERENCE DAYS

Periodically throughout the year, we have early release days for Inservice Workshops. We also have parent conference days usually in December and March/April. These days necessitate an earlier bus schedule. Children are released at about 12:00 noon. The School Calendar includes these days.

NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

DELAYED OPENINGS

The Superintendent of Schools shall determine the necessity for emergency closing or delayed opening of schools due to weather conditions or other emergencies. Announcements concerning such closings are made over local radio stations WBRK (1340 AM, 101.7 FM), WSBS (860 AM) and WBEC (1420 AM, 105.5 FM). No school announcements also appear on some of the "local" television stations. At 7:00 a.m. An automated calling system will also be used to let families, staff and community members know that school has been cancelled.

WRITTEN NOTES

Children should bring a note written by parents:

- .. for early dismissal - to be released only to identified authorized persons at the Principal's Office
- .. for going home other than in the usual manner
- .. for going to scout meetings or church school (Blanket permission may be sent for the year)
- .. for excusing child for absence from school for any reason
- .. for tardiness
- .. for requesting special treatment
- .. for allowing someone other than the parent to be temporarily responsible for the child
- .. for changing of residence necessitating leaving the school (Time is needed to prepare transfer records. Parents must sign a release of information form before records are forwarded to the new school).
- .. for exceptions in riding the school bus (See bus regulations)
- .. for going on field trips during class time
 - for participation in extracurricular and intramural programs.

We discourage notes asking that a child stay in at recess because we cannot always provide supervision. We ask that requests for students to stay in at recess be limited to medical situations in which a physician has made the specific request.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

We believe that once children are in school it is better to keep them here in the case of a weather emergency rather than send them home early. In the case of another type of emergency, we would have the closing announced on the radio and make every effort to reach parents by telephone; otherwise, we will hold the students at school.

STUDENTS TAKEN ON VACATION

As is the case each year, we receive questions from parents concerning the assignment of school work during a vacation or family trip that occurs when school is in session. While we find it very difficult for students to miss school time, family trips can also have great educational value. It has become necessary to create the following guidelines should requests be made to have materials, assignments, etc., prepared by the school for the child's use during the vacation:

1. the loan of textbooks is permissible
2. special assignments for the child to do while away are not to be given
3. we assume no obligation to grade any assignments presumed to have been done by the child during his/her absence
4. upon return, the burden of making up work missed during the absence is upon the child
5. except for the inevitable losses incurred as a result of the absence from scheduled classes and the failure to make up work missed, the school will not impose any penalty upon child or parent as a consequence of the absence.

FOOD CONCERNS

Because of food excesses, uncertainty of ingredients in baked goods, and diverse religious customs, we request that you not send food in at holiday times; teachers in many grades have food-related activities that relate to events in the curriculum – many times in Pre-School and Kindergarten, less frequent as the children get older. We will, from time to time, have a curriculum-related event, like a curriculum related event, quiet reading time, or a math activity in which the teachers may ask for food items. Teachers will take into account food allergies as they plan for the event. *Please do not send in any food or drink for special events without first okaying it with the classroom teacher.* These are always at the teacher's discretion and should be respected as such.

PARTIES IN CLASSROOMS

Parties are held at the discretion of the classroom teacher on a limited basis and do not generally interfere with the instructional program. Our PTO has a monthly celebration during lunchtime for students celebrating birthdays during the month. Please do not send birthday treats to school with your child. **This is extremely important because of food allergies!!**

STUDENT RECORDS

The student record cards of students in Grades Kindergarten through Grade 5 are kept in the Main Office at the Morris School. Parents have the right of access to these records. Access to records is obtained by written request to the Elementary Principal. Release of student information or transfer of records may take place only with the written consent of the parents. The Massachusetts Department of Education [Student Records Regulations](#) and [A Guide for Students and Parents on the Massachusetts Regulations Pertaining to Student Records](#) are included in the Lenox School Committee Policy Manual available in each school.

Massachusetts State Law on Student Records Access for Non-Custodial Parents (General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34 H) specifies process for non-custodial parents requesting the school records of their children (i.e. report cards, discipline notices). Please contact the Principal's office for information regarding this process and the request form that must be submitted. **This request and form must be submitted annually by non-custodial parents.**

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to visit and become active in the schools. Please make prior arrangements with the classroom teachers to set up conferences or classroom visitations. Teachers may be contacted during the regular workday (8:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.). Phone calls will not be put through to teachers during instructional time. You may however, leave a voice message for a teacher. Your call will be returned at their earliest convenience.

If you have concerns about your child's learning or social experience at school, please contact your child's teacher. Any changes at home that may affect your child's school performance should be communicated to the classroom teacher as well.

Should any school problem arise concerning your child, please see or call the classroom teacher. By School Committee policy you must do this first. Usually all difficulties can be solved at this level. The Elementary Principal is available to help if the issues cannot be resolved.

TRANSPORTATION

Free bus transportation is provided to all Kindergarten through Grade Five students living more than one and one-half miles from their school. Bus stops are located within easy walking distance of their homes. Transportation may be furnished for shorter distances if, in the opinion of the School Committee, the area is unreasonably hazardous relative to the age of the child concerned. Elementary bus routes are published on the Morris School Website: www.lenoxps.org/morris/index.php the week before school starts each year. Paper copies can be obtained by calling the school office.

School buses are used to take children on field trips and to other school functions.

Parents who wish to bring their children to school are welcome to do so – students should be dropped off no earlier than 8:20 a.m. and should be dropped at the small circle by the Preschool entrance to enter through the front doors. If you are dropping a student for an early morning activity, you may use the main circle until 8:15 a.m.

Our bus policy allows each student to have two regular consistent drop-off points. Students will not be allowed to ride on a different bus from their regular one or be dropped off at any other stop for any social purpose. If a child needs to go to a different stop, it is the parent's responsibility to have the child picked up at school.

When Kindergarten children are being dropped off on the 1:25 bus run, we ask that a parent or other adult be present at the bus stop to wave off the driver. If an adult is not present, the driver will proceed on the route, notify the bus company and school, and take the child to the High School where the parent may pick up the child. The bus schedule is very tight and when the buses finish dropping off Kindergartners, they

go right to the high school for their next route. We will make every effort to contact a parent in this circumstance.

PARENT PICK-UPS AT 3:10 P.M.

If you wish to pick up your child at the end of the day, we ask that you follow these procedures:

- Students in **Grades K-1 (and older brothers or sisters)** will be brought to the Preschool entrance by the small circle; parents should park around the circle and wait for the children to arrive from their classrooms. If students have not yet arrived at the door for pick-up we ask that parents carefully circle until the student is brought out.
- Students in **Grades 2-5** will be brought to the playground doors at the back of the building; parents should form a line of cars by those doors (being careful to leave plenty of room to loop around) and children will be dismissed as each car pulls up to the door. At certain times of the year, classes may be outside for gym or other activities and we ask that you not approach the playground doors until 3:10 p.m.

We are interested in safe departures from the school property; please drive carefully as cars may be backing out of parking spots and children may be crossing the parking lot.

BICYCLE AND WALKING SAFETY

Children are expected to walk on the sidewalks, cross at the protected crossings, and never walk in the road.

Children may ride bicycles to school with parental approval. There are bicycle racks at school where bicycles should be locked. Children should not ride their bicycles on the playground.

ASSIGNMENT TO CLASSES

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE AGE

Children must be five years of age on or before September 1 to enter Kindergarten.

In assigning students to classes, the elementary principal will normally consider a variety of issues to ensure that each child will have a successful school year. Examples of such issues include but are not limited to the following: a fair distribution of sexes, specific health needs, special needs services required, inter-personal relationships, learning styles, and academic and social needs. The principal will place heavy priority on teacher recommendations.

Parents who have information that may be relevant when assignments are being made are asked to contact the elementary principal. Parent information should be submitted in writing to the elementary principal by May 1 of each school year.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

The Lenox School Committee has a policy on the promotion and retention of elementary students. Key sections are reprinted here.

Determination of a child's retention should be made following careful evaluations and conferences involving the principal, teacher(s), and parents. It is generally agreed that the earlier the retention, the more effective it is. Ordinarily, a child shall be promoted if he/she shows sufficient physical, social, emotional and intellectual maturity so that he/she can be expected to have a successful experience at the next grade level. If retention is considered, the best interests and long-range welfare of the child shall be prime consideration.

The elementary principal shall be responsible for making the final decision on retention based on consultations with school personnel and a careful weighing of teacher and parental recommendations. Under Chapter 766 regulations, the principal shall determine if a referral for a core evaluation is appropriate whenever a child is in substantial risk of non-promotion.

The possibility of retention must be made known to them [parents] well in advance -- no later than the end of the second marking period.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

MORRIS PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Morris Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the local parent group, has as its main purpose to act as a dynamic support group dedicated to a high quality of education in the Lenox Public Schools. The Morris PTO sponsors informational programs and funds special projects. PTO funds are mainly raised through one large fund-raising project. Some ongoing projects include Kindergarten Parents Reception, The Book Swap, Yearbook, Children's Book Fair, Morris Library helpers, Skate Night, April Fools Road Race, and the Thanksgiving Feast. The PTO has also given generous financial support to the Library, to the faculty and staff, has supported numerous artistic performances and events, and has put money and time into each of the school playgrounds.

The PTO is actively looking for parents to participate in their activities. If you would like to be a part of this group enhancing the education of the children in Lenox, please contact one of the PTO representatives.

MORRIS SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 established School Councils in each school in the Commonwealth. The Morris School School Council normally has 9 members (4 parents, 3 teachers, 1 community representative, and the elementary principal). The Council

meets at least five times a school year to assist the principal in (1) adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards, (2) identifying the educational needs of students attending the school, (3) reviewing the annual school building budget, and (4) formulating a **school improvement plan**. Whenever there is an opening on the Council, parents will be notified and may express an interest to be a member. All School Council meetings are posted at the Town Hall and are open to the public.

PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

The Morris School has a Parent Resource Center in the Library. Materials are available in the PRC on a variety of issues including parenting, siblings, health topics, discipline, special needs, and much more. All materials are available to be borrowed.

PARENT SURVEY

We conduct an annual survey of parents to determine your level of satisfaction with your child's education and general procedures at the school. We do this in early May and release the results to the school community in June. Your input is important.

VOLUNTEERS

The Morris School has a Volunteer Coordinator who works with parents and other community members who wish to volunteer in the schools. The Volunteer Coordinator may conduct training, discuss confidentiality, and makes connections with volunteers and teachers.

If any parent feels he/she would like to help with classroom activities, accompany children on field trips, help with parties or special projects, etc., please contact the school office. All volunteers are required to submit to a CORI background check.

PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Morris School employs a number of paraprofessional support staff who supervise the cafeteria and playground in addition to their clerical duties. These support people play a very important role in keeping our students safe and insuring that school policies re behavior are maintained.

In addition, we have a behavioral intervention assistant who works with students who have been disruptive in the classroom, have consistently violated school rules, or who have been aggressive with other students or staff. Students are referred to the behavior intervention assistant by school personnel.

MORRIS SCHOOL WEBSITE

Up-to-date information about events, school lunch menus, important meetings and student accomplishments can be found at www.lenoxps.org/morris/index.php. Mrs. Jezak maintains the site.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Throughout the year we offer a variety of before or after school activities for children in grades 2-5. These include music, art, athletic, computer, foreign language, science and service club programs and change according to student need and staff availability. Check for notices sent home concerning before and after school programs in the fall. Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school for programs held before or after regular school hours.

FIELD TRIPS

Classes are taken on field trips when it is felt that such an experience would benefit the class and enrich the instructional program. Parental permission is always sought when a trip is being planned. Parents are often asked to accompany the classes. Blanket permission slips are sent home in the fall for all walking trips in Lenox. If children are bussed from one public school to another in Lenox for a special program we do not send home permission slips.

ASSEMBLIES AND CONCERTS

We try to provide several assemblies or concerts each year for our students. These programs come from various sources such as the Berkshire Theater Festival, The Tanglewood Institute and Young Audiences. The Lenox School Department and the Lenox PTO select and fund these programs.

MORNING MEETINGS

We hold Morning Meeting Assemblies for all students once a month on Wednesday morning. At this time we discuss good citizenship and courtesy topics, allow individual students or small groups to perform. Some Morning Meetings are reserved for in school performances of our Chorus and Band ensembles.

GIFTS

Gift exchanges between teachers and students are discouraged. There may be "grab bags" during the holiday season in some classrooms.

PARTY INVITATIONS

We ask that children or parents do not distribute invitations to birthday or other parties at school in order to remain sensitive to children not invited to the party. Invitations brought to school for distribution will be returned to the child or parent by the class teacher.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual student and group pictures are taken in October or November. Parents have a variety of options of the size packages they may wish to purchase.

YEARBOOK

A group of interested students and parents work on a yearbook available to students and staff for a low fee at the end of each school year. Students will not be denied a yearbook because of an inability to pay this fee. Parents may inquire in confidence with the principal if this is the case.

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

The Principal issues a newsletter monthly. The newsletter highlights upcoming events, recognizes outstanding performances, and pays tribute to those who have helped contribute to our youngsters' education. If you have a contribution to the newsletter, it should be turned in to the Principal's secretary. All parents are encouraged to access this newsletter electronically by signing up for electronic distribution or by simply visiting the Morris School website: www.lenoxps.org/morris/index.php

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

Fire and school evacuation drills are held on a regular basis. Emergency bus evacuation drills are held during the fall and spring. The school makes every effort to assure students that these are practice situations. Parents should also speak with their children about the occurrence of these drills and let the school know if your children need special preparation from school personnel because of their sensitivity to such situations.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found boxes are located in specified areas at the school. Your child may check with the teacher or paraprofessionals for any lost articles. All coats, hats, gloves, and boots should be labeled with your child's name. Parents may also come and check for missing items.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Elementary grade classes at the Morris School are organized in accordance with a philosophy which recognizes the student as the focal point in the learning process. Primary objectives are to help the child establish and retain identity as an individual within the classroom environment and progress at his/her own rate.

A core curriculum for reading/language arts, math, social studies and science aligns with instructional frameworks developed by the state Department of Education. Currently schools across the commonwealth are transitioning to a new set of standards known as the National Common Core Standards.

NCLB REPORT CARD

As a school receiving public funds Morris is subject to the testing and reporting requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Parents are encouraged to review the school's **NCLB Report Card** at <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu>. Hard copies of this report shall be provided upon request.

GENERAL

The **Kindergarten** experience is a very important step in the life of your child. An initial objective in Kindergarten is to ease the transition of five-year-old youngsters from home to school life. Socially, your child is provided with opportunities for interaction in both large and small groups. The specialists in Art, Music, Gym, Library, and Computer further enhance the kindergarten program. Throughout the school year the children participate in a variety of readiness activities in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics to prepare them for successful experiences in Grade 1 and beyond.

A primary goal of the instructional program in **grades one to five** is the teaching of basic skills, particularly where reading, language arts, and mathematics are concerned. However, an equally important aim is to teach the learning processes as well as content, so that children can become more effective problem solvers and independent thinkers. Science and social studies are particularly effective vehicles for developing these capabilities. In the interest of the child's total development, experiences are provided to promote physical maturation and foster creative expression. Toward these ends, specialists in art, music, and physical education teach all classes on a regular basis to supplement those activities presented by the classroom teacher. Handwriting is taught by all classroom teachers.

READING

Reading instruction at Morris School encompasses the five areas of reading outlined by the National Reading Panel. Children in grades K-3 acquire phonemic awareness and phonics skills sequentially and systematically through Wilson Foundations, a research-based, multi-sensory phonics program. Through small group reading instruction, children in grades K-2 are taught word-solving techniques, how to key in to interesting words, and how to monitor and apply comprehension and meta-cognitive strategies as they read. In grades 3-5, children engage in vocabulary and word study activities that emphasize common roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Reading instruction in all grades is coordinated by a certified reading specialist.

WRITING

The Lenox writing program emphasizes the process of writing starting with its basics in kindergarten. Children are actively engaged in pre-writing, first drafts, feedback, re-writing, teacher conferences, and ultimately final drafts. Children write from experience, practicing different forms of communication from journal writing, stories, friendly letters, business letters, and poetry to report writing, and a given topic may take from one to four weeks to be completely developed by a child. The 2011-2012 school year will bring exploration of new methods of writing instruction. Different classrooms may be piloting different methods such as "The Writers Workshop" and "Empowering Writers."

MATHEMATICS

Our goal in Mathematics is to produce mathematically-powerful thinkers and problem-solvers who are confident and feel comfortable using math in their daily lives. Starting in 2011-2012 all Morris classrooms will be adopting a new math series recently developed to meet the rigors of the Common Core Standards. **Go Math!** Is a K-6 math program different than previous math instruction in that it is more focused on deeper mastery of a smaller set of math concepts. It is designed to serve the needs of a variety of math learners and features core lessons for all followed by re-teach, practice, or enrichment. Go Math! replaces two math programs (Mathland and Addison-Wesley Mathematics) which were used in grades k-2 and 3-5 respectively. Starting in 2011-2012 a district math specialist will oversee the roll out of go math and coordinate math instruction in the elementary and middle schools.

TITLE I READING/MATH PROGRAM

We offer a Title I Reading Program to supplement our regular Reading and Math. This program gives additional reading instruction to children who may have had a difficult time learning to read fluently or who may benefit from additional face-to-face instruction in reading and math. We use Reading Assistants within the regular classroom and children are selected by ranking all children based on scores on Reading tests, teacher recommendations, and history of reading difficulty. In Grades 4-5, students are selected using similar criteria as above but may be additionally assessed using a writing sample given at the end of Grade 3. Results of the MCAS tests, when available, are also used to determine eligibility and specific needs.

SOCIAL STUDIES/SCIENCE

Instruction in both social studies and science attempts to achieve a balance between factual information and conceptual understanding. Children are expected to participate in "hands-on" projects as well as to use text materials in their exploration of the expanding world. Both areas are currently under review to assess the curriculum fit with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in *History and Social Science* and *Science and Technology*.

The social studies program leads from a study of *Myself and Others*, *Customs Around the World*, national celebrations, and European exploration in the primary grades, to *Native Americans*, *Shakers*, the *Revolutionary and Civil Wars*, and *Westward Expansion* in Grade 3, *Early Civilizations*, *Ancient*, and *Medieval Civilizations* in Grade 4, to *United States History* (early exploration to 1815) in Grade 5. Throughout the grades, an emphasis is placed on discussing men and women who have been key figures in United States history.

The science program tries to build conceptual skills through a balanced curriculum with units taught from three major areas - biological, physical, and earth & space science. Emphasis is placed on hands-on discovery. We do units on the *Five Senses*, *Health/Nutrition*, *Plants*, *Weather and Seasons*, *Metamorphosis*, *Bees*, *Balls and Ramps*, *Magnetism*, *Sound*, *Dinosaurs*, *Solutions*, *Energy*, the *Human Body*, the *Solar System*, *Ecology*, *Changes of State*, *Insects*, *Trees*, *Birds*, *Whales*, *Pond Life*, *Endangered Animals*, *Geology*, *Electric Currents*, and *Micro Gardening* in various grades. Individual teachers may add other units of study to supplement this list.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Health education takes place in all grades from PreK through Grade 5 and is incorporated into the curriculum in a variety of ways, depending on grade level. Some units are taught using **The Great Body Shop** curriculum; others are presented by the classroom teacher, guest speakers, or consultants who come to school to speak with our children at assembly programs or in individual classrooms. Major topics addressed in the health education curriculum include: *Health & Disease*, *Substance Use, Misuse, and Abuse*, *Emotional/Mental Health/Affective Education*, *Safety and First Aid*, *Personal Safety - Child/Sexual Abuse*, *Physical Growth & Development*, *Environmental Health*, *Consumer Health*, *Community Health*, and *Healthful Lifestyles*. The Morris health will continue to be under review and revision during the 2011-2012 school year.

WORLD LANGUAGE

The Morris School offers basic foreign language instruction in both Spanish and French. Students in grades K-3 have twice weekly classes in Spanish and in grades 4-5 students switch to twice weekly instruction in French. Instruction in both languages is conversation based and focuses on developing a very basic recognition and of sounds and words to enable simple communication.

ART

Each class has art instruction once a week under the direction of the art teacher. The art program provides an exposure to a variety of art media. Students are expected to explore various art forms applying their own level of creativity and imagination to each project or task. The emphasis is on the process of their involvement with various art media. The classroom teachers and the art teacher often integrate art projects into the regular instructional program. We hold an Art Show in the spring with each student's artwork on display throughout the Morris School.

MUSIC/INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Singing, rhythm, theory, and music appreciation are taught once a week to each class by the music teacher. Music instruction at Morris aligns with state guidelines and is based largely on the instructional philosophies of Orff and Kodaly. Each class includes several opportunities to experience and make music through listening, movement, instruments, and voice.

Students are given access to instruments from kindergarten on but may choose to select an instrument in fourth grade. Fourth grade and fifth grade are instructional years with band instruments and fifth grade band students perform as an ensemble twice during the year. There is a fee for instrument rental but students will not be denied participation in band due to an inability to pay. Parents may inquire in confidence with the principal if this is the case. Students in grade two and up may also choose to participate in chorus ensemble, a group that meets before school and performs for the community during the school year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The children in Grades K-5 have physical education twice a week. These classes are taught by our physical education teacher(s). The program offers each child a chance to learn fundamental fitness concepts, to participate in physical activities, and to improve cardio-vascular endurance; to learn social skills in cooperative and competitive settings; to develop an enjoyment of participation in sport, fitness, cooperative, and recreational activities; and to develop basic sport and recreational skills. The program is designed for children to develop strength, endurance, speed, coordination, flexibility, poise, balance, and a good sense of equilibrium.

LIBRARY

The Morris School is fortunate to have both a wonderful, completely automated library and a complementary relationship with the **Lenox Library** on Main Street. The children's librarian from the Lenox Library visits the Morris Library and works with our Library Assistant. Classes visit the library weekly to select books, hear stories, and receive instruction in proper use of the library and reference materials. Library time is also a time for students to receive extra help, complete assessments, conference with teachers, and complete independent research.

COMPUTER INSTRUCTION

Instruction in computer technology is given to children from first grade on. Morris School is well equipped with technology learning tools managed by a computer and technology teacher. The 24 unit computer lab was recently upgraded and now may host as many as 24 students for a 45 minute computer learning class. The goal of the technology program is two-fold: first and foremost, to enhance and support the classroom curriculum via educational software, and second, to provide students with instruction in the use of educational technology so that they may progress toward independent use. All student access to internet resources is closely supervised and all online content is filtered for security.

An integral part of the technology program is the ethical and appropriate use of the computer in school, at home, and in interaction with others. Parents are urged to monitor their children's use of the computer at home, to install devices that ensure their children's safety and shield them from material which may be harmful to themselves or others.

HOME TUTORING

Parents who expect their child will be absent for an extended time due to illness or an accident should contact the elementary principal about home tutoring.

HOMEWORK

It is sound educational practice to develop good study habits by encouraging children to take upon themselves school-assigned responsibilities at home at an early age. It is equally important to make each school-assigned home responsibility an effective part of the child's learning program.

Homework should be:

- .. an outgrowth of and preparation for class activities
- .. an opportunity to build work habits
- .. a vehicle to develop and reinforce skill
- .. a child's responsibility

Parents often wonder whether they should help their children with homework. Children should be encouraged to begin an assignment and to complete as much of it alone as possible. But assignments which seemed clear in the classroom may reveal hidden difficulties once the child is on his/her own. Herein lies another value of homework: anything a parent can do to explain, discuss, or remove confusion will reinforce your support of learning.

The amount of time a child spends on homework will vary considerably. Some children work fast, others slowly; some are conscientious, others less so; some do their homework at free moments during school time, others do not; some budget their time so that long-term assignments are painless, even fun - others wait until the last minute and cause family chaos.

When assignments are made, teachers will consider the total amount of homework for which the child is responsible.

From Kindergarten through Grade Two teachers assign homework as conditions warrant. In Grades Three through Five homework is assigned on a routine basis. Some assignments are given nightly and others are of a long-term nature. The following is a general estimate of time allotment for homework:

Grade Three - 30 min./day **Grade Four** - 45 min./day **Grade Five** -60 min./day

When homework is assigned, deadlines are expected to be met; however, latitude for extension must remain with the teacher in consideration of extenuating circumstances. Consequences for incomplete homework assignments are left to the teacher's discretion.

The students should receive feedback on assignments, be it by teacher correction, student correction, discussion, etc.

PARENTS AND HOMEWORK

Parents can help to train and develop independence and responsibility in their child or children concerning homework by:

- .. providing a specific place to do homework that is quiet, has enough work space, and has proper light for good vision
- .. supervising and scheduling specific time for homework to be done
- .. asking to see completed homework
- .. being sure your child brings his/her homework and books back to school each morning
- .. informing the teacher when your child does not understand assignments or cannot do the work
- .. showing interest in your child's homework and other school experiences
- .. talking with, listening to, and doing things with your child
- .. avoiding comparing your child with other children
- .. letting your child know you care about his/her success
- .. informing the school that another language other than English is spoken at home

REPORT CARDS/CONFERENCES

Report cards are sent home three times a year. Parent-teacher conferences are held on a school-wide basis twice a year with the classroom teachers (usually December and March/April). These conferences are by appointment. Notices are sent home well in advance of the conferences. Good communication between parents and teachers by means of conferences and reports is essential in understanding the children's needs and their progress in school.

The marks that appear on your child's report card vary depending on the grade level of the child.

E - Exceptional achievement

S - Satisfactory

SS - Successful with Support

I - Improvement since last report

N - Needs to improve

U - Unsatisfactory

NA - Not Applicable at this time

The following are among the criteria used to select the appropriate mark:

1. The progress your child has made from the beginning of the fall term to the first report and from each report thereafter.
2. The potential ability your child has for academic development.
3. The achievement your child has shown in relation to his/her grade level.
4. The work habits and attitude your child has demonstrated.

Comment sheets will often be inserted with the report card indicating specific areas of the curriculum studied during the marking period. The teacher may also feel it is necessary to give you further explanation of your child's progress.

TESTING PROGRAM

In the past two years Morris faculty have adopted a framework for instruction and assessment called **Response to Intervention** or RTI. This model assumes that most children will acquire requisite skills with core instruction, but there will be some students that need different or modified instruction to acquire those same skills. Morris uses periodic benchmark and progress monitoring assessments known as AIMSweb to track students' mastery of skills and determine who will receive supplemental instruction. Other instruments may be used to find out what specifically is preventing the child from making progress. These measures include the Qualitative Reading Inventory, The KeyMath, the Slingerland readiness tests, and GRADE. Any parent who wishes specific information about a child's test results may make an appointment with the Elementary Principal.

Additionally, the **MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System)** tests are given according to the following schedule:

Grades 3/4/5 - English Language Arts - Reading (April), Mathematics (May)

Grade 4 - English Language Arts - Composition (April)

Grade 5: Science and Technology, History and Social Science (May)

The MCAS tests are designed to measure what the students know and are able to do and are matched to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. All students are required to take these tests. The school also uses MCAS results to measure the effectiveness of its programs.

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

The elementary guidance program is implemented by a master's level child development specialist/family therapist. The program is shaped to promote self-esteem, coping and problem solving skills, and positive social interaction for youngsters in grades K-5. The thrust of the guidance program is both preventive and proactive: It is well known that children who feel good about themselves, know how to make and keep friends, and have confidence in their own ability to deal with stress, are at low risk for drug and alcohol abuse, delinquent behavior, depression, and aggression. By supporting our students in their attempts to address difficulties as they occur, and encouraging a positive approach to social and emotional issues, we are enabling the children's ability to make healthy decisions for themselves as they grow older.

Utilizing a systemic, developmental approach, guidance services available to students, parents, and staff take several forms:

..A classroom program for grades K-3 that helps students develop a sound sense of self, respect for and tolerance of others, and a sense of belonging and responsibility to their community.

..FRIENDS groups, for students needing to strengthen their social skills, expand their circle of friends, or develop a sense of belonging within our school community.

..Individual and family sessions for students and parents experiencing stress (at home or school) that impacts on the children's school performance, academically, socially or behaviorally.

..Parents Groups for mothers and fathers wishing to discuss the development and behavior of children in various grades.

..Conferencing and consultation with teachers and parents regardless of whether their students/children are in counseling.

..Crisis intervention in situations requiring rapid resolution, referral, or mediation.

The guidance program is one that is always evolving, based on developmentally appropriate concepts and activities for the students and current understandings of what supports positive social and emotional growth for children. Parents are encouraged to contact the guidance counselor with concerns or requests of service for their children.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Recognizing that individual differences exist among children, the Lenox Public Schools offer a number of special services to its students designed to help them fulfill their individual potential. All of these services come under the guidelines of **Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the federal IDEA (2004), The Massachusetts Board of Education**, (the implementing regulations of these laws being 34 CFR, MGL 71c 71B.) Included among these services are screening, evaluation, special education instruction, and services related to the child's identified need. Related services include speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling.

Individual educational plans (IEPs) are provided for children with special needs.

SCREENING

Early Childhood (children ages three and four) and Kindergarten entry screening (children age five) take place each Spring to ascertain the presence of special educational needs and to provide teachers with information about each child so they can plan for each child individually. Beginning with a parent questionnaire, screening covers a physical examination, vision and hearing testing, speech and language, fine and gross motor skills, discrimination and memory, and other mental abilities.

Early Childhood screening is optional on the part of the parent. Kindergarten entry screening is required for all children entering Kindergarten. In each case parents may discuss the results of the screening with the appropriate school personnel.

For most children, the screening is one of the first experiences they may have in the school setting. The teachers involved in the screening take into account shyness or reticence to take part in their assessment of the child's development. Most children enjoy the screening process.

Following screening a recommendation is sometimes made for evaluation. At this point parents are always contacted and become part of the decision-making team to determine if further evaluation should be made.

SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION

If a child is in need of special education services, an appropriate combination of classroom instruction and specialized help is developed. The goal of such help is always to enable a child to progress to the upper limits of his/her ability in the least restrictive environment. Special education takes place in one of our three resource rooms or directly in the classrooms. Programs are designed to help children who may have physical handicaps, intellectual limitations, specific learning disabilities, developmental and emotional disabilities, sensory, neurological, communication disorders or other health concerns that may prevent the child from making effective progress in the regular education program.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

Children who do not learn early in life to express themselves well, to understand and to be understood, are seriously hampered. The special needs program provides corrective speech instruction by a master's level licensed speech language pathologist. The program helps children who have difficulties in the areas of articulation, language, rhythm, and voice. After diagnosis, appropriate therapy is prescribed. Instruction, treatment, and drill take place in an individual or small group setting.

COUNSELING AND EVALUATION SERVICES

The elementary school is served by two school adjustment counselors who are master's level social workers. They are part of the Special Needs Evaluation Team and when appropriate, the Morris Support Team. Their role is to assess referred students' individual social/emotional needs through observation and interviews with teachers, parents and children, and make recommendations that are practical for teachers and parents to follow, as well as to provide necessary counseling services.

Counseling takes place in an individual, group, or family setting. The purpose of this counseling is to help children resolve personal conflicts that affect their adjustment to school and to improve their interpersonal skills around communication and problem-solving.

It is often supportive and helpful for students to bring a classmate to counseling sessions. Parents whose children may accompany a student in group counseling sessions beyond two visits will be notified and permission for extended group participation will be requested.

SERVICES THROUGH SECTION 504

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Lenox Public Schools affirm that no qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by the Lenox Public Schools. Any inquires regarding this policy should be directed to Cynthia Dinan - Director of Student Services, 129 West St., Lenox, MA 01240 or call 413-637-5517.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Special Needs Department operates two half-day **Preschool programs** at the Morris School for children ages three and four. Both programs are integrated; that is, they serve both children who have been identified as having special needs as well as "typical" peer role models. Children identified as having special needs are guaranteed service; there are a limited number of openings available for typical peers each year.

Preschool programs are provided under the guidelines of Chapter 766 (Special Education Services), the federal IDEA (2004) its implementing regulations being 34 CFR 300, MGL c71B, and the Massachusetts Board of Education regulations at 603 CMR, 28.00.

LENOX SPECIAL NEEDS PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

Our local Parent Advisory Council was formed in 1987 and is comprised of parents who have or have had a child or children needing special education or Title I services. Meetings are held monthly and parents are encouraged to attend. Please call the Special Education Office (637-5571) for meeting dates.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE SCHOOL

IMPORTANT: TREE NUT, PEANUT, and OTHER SERIOUS FOOD ALLERGIES

Some students who attend Morris have **life-threatening** tree nut/peanut allergies. For these students, ingestion of any form of tree nut/peanut substance is potentially fatal. In addition, the risk of coming into contact with a desk or other surface that came in contact with nut products could create a life-threatening reaction.

For these reasons, parents may be asked to avoid any and all snacks containing nuts if the potential for an allergic reaction exists in a Morris classroom. This may include daily snacks and foods for field trips, birthdays and classroom projects. Due to the obvious safety concerns, the school requires adherence to this request without exception, meaning that a child bringing nut containing snacks into an allergy-risk classroom will not be permitted to open or consume the snack.

The Morris cafeteria does not serve or use any tree nut or peanut product as part of our lunch program. Parents are welcome to send nut butters in your child's lunch even if your child's classroom has an identified allergy risk. In the cafeteria there are nut free tables and students with nut products in their lunch are not be permitted to sit at those tables.

The school nurse should be advised of any food allergies that a student may have. Parents are asked to make the nurse aware of these and any other serious concerns prior to the student's attendance at Morris. School Health Services promote the health of students through prevention, case-finding, early intervention and remediation of specific problems, provision of direct services for students with special needs, and provision of health counseling to promote an optimal level of wellness for students and staff.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

School Health Services promote the health of students through prevention, screening, early intervention, and remediation of specific problems. Health services provides direct services for students with special needs and provides health counseling to promote an optimal level of wellness for students and staff.

SCHOOL NURSING SERVICES

A registered nurse is available at the Morris School to provide the following services: Care of students/staff when they are ill or injured; mandatory screenings which include vision and hearing, height and weight, and postural screening (5th grade); periodic all-school head lice screenings, conducted as needed; communicable disease control; immunization control; maintenance of health records; physical assessment and physical examinations; medication administration; health counseling; collaboration regarding pertinent health issues with faculty, staff and other health professionals; environmental health; health agency referrals; specialized health care plans for children with special health care needs.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

According to Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations as outlined in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Law, physical examinations and immunization records are required upon entering preschool, kindergarten and all new admissions. Physical examinations are also required in grade 4. Parents have the option of having their child's Pre-Kindergarten or Grade 4 physicals done at the school by our school physician.

Before admission, all students must submit proof of immunization to be reviewed by the school nurse who will authorize admission. Except as specifically provided for by law, children, not successfully immunized, are to be excluded from school in accordance with Chapter 76, Section 15 of the Massachusetts General Laws. The school nurse will make recommendations for exclusion to the Elementary Principal.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

Children who have indications of communicable disease should remain at home until fully recovered. The family physician should issue a note stating that the child may return to school. To keep health records up-to-date, it is important that the nature of the illness be stated.

ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS POLICIES

School is for students who are well. Please do not send your child to school if he or she has any sign of illness.

In case of illness, the school makes necessary arrangements for the sick child to return home. Normally, the school cannot provide transportation for students who are ill or injured. Please identify on the Emergency Information Card the person(s) who will call for your child if he/she is ill or has had an accident. We require the emergency information cards so that we have on file the directions you want followed in the event your child has to return home due to illness or accident during the school day.

Please let the school nurse know if your child is ill. If possible, also include information about the diagnosis and expected period of absence from school.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

The *Authorization for Medications To Be Taken During School Hours* is required in order for students to receive medications at school. This applies to non-prescription as well as prescription medications. Both a parent's signature and the prescribing physician's signature are required. Please contact the School Nurse if your child needs medications.

The medication must be sent in a prescription bottle and should not be sent to school with the child. It should be brought personally by the parent to the School Nurse.

MEDICAL NOTES

When a child has been ill or injured and has returned to school, we expect the child to participate fully in school activities both in and out of the classroom. Exceptions to this policy may only be made with a specific dated medical note giving the reason why the child should not take part and giving the specific length of time the note should be in effect. All notes should be written by the parent, guardian, or physician. We expect children to go out for all recesses unless excused by a specific medical note.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE SCHOOL: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct for Morris Elementary, adapted for our age group from district policy, is constructed around the following statement of student rights:

At Morris School all students have a right to attend school and learn in a safe and ordered setting. Students may not behave in such a way that keeps school-mates, class-mates, or themselves from enjoying this right.

To preserve the right of safe and unfettered learning, members of the school community assume specific roles:

The **Student** should strive to Respect Others, Respect Themselves, Respect Property, and Respect the Learning Environment.

The **Classroom Teacher** is the key person in developing and enforcing guidelines for appropriate behavior in the school setting and working (privately or in classroom discussion groups) with students and parents to act on consequences as necessary.

The **Head Teacher**, in the absence of the principal, assists school personnel in determining consequences for serious violations of student conduct.

Each **Parent** has a vital role to play in the entire process of encouraging acceptable behavior from his/her children and participating in consequences in cooperation with the classroom teacher and other school personnel.

The **Principal** confers with students, teachers, and parents and tries to make decisions that will help the students develop responsible and respectful behavior.

The **Guidance Counselor** helps respond to inappropriate student behaviors. S/he supports all staff, students, and parents by providing group instruction about friendships, dealing with emotions, and other issues. The Guidance Counselor assists in the development and implementation of behavior plans.

The **School Intervention Assistant** assists teachers, paraprofessionals, specialists, and the principal when a child's behavior is out of compliance with school rules and expectations. She does her work in the classrooms, on the playgrounds, in the cafeteria and in a room designated for in-school suspension. The intervention assistant provides activities that help students de-escalate, learn about appropriate social behavior and choices, and models appropriate responses to school rules and regulations.

MISBEHAVIOR AND CONSEQUENCES

There will be times when consequences for violations of the rules will be necessary. Consequences are in direct relation to the infraction; teachers and parents should involve the student as appropriate in decision-making regarding fair and instructive use of these consequences. The goal of consequences is two-fold: to reduce or eliminate recurrence of the behavior and to teach the student why the behavior is not appropriate in our school setting.

Changing behavior patterns of a misbehaving child sometimes takes a long period of time. The teacher or other adults who have direct contact with the child will continue to encourage the child's efforts to improve.

1. Procedures for Extreme Behavior (Classroom, School Building, Playground)

Examples of extreme behavior problems which may occur at school are:

- A child leaving school premises without permission.
- A child physically harming or threatening a staff member or student..
- A child destroying or using school property improperly.
- A child swearing in the presence of others.

If such action occurs, the adult in charge will notify the Principal or Head Teacher. The child will be separated from other students and/or removed from the area. During the course of the day, the Principal, Interventionist, or Head

Teacher will confer with the child, contact the child's parents, and will work toward resolving the problem, including assigning an appropriate consequence from the continuum of consequences. The problem and its resolution will be discussed by the Principal and/or Head Teacher, the parent, and the child before the child returns to class. The adult initially involved with the misbehavior will write up a disciplinary slip or incident report.

2. Procedures for Serious Misbehavior

Examples of very serious behavior problems are:

- A child being habitually tardy to school.
- A child disrupting the classroom or instruction.
- A child making fun of another student (Bullying)
- A child playing dangerously on the playground.

The adult in charge will react to an instance of very serious misbehavior, reinforce the rules, and determine an appropriate consequence. If necessary, the adult in charge will notify the Head Teacher and/or Principal. A discipline notice will be sent home and the adult and student will work together to establish a consequence. Depending on the situation, the staff will meet to determine if the behavior warrants referral for other services or outside supports.

3. Suspension Procedures

A student may be suspended by the Principal or his designee when the student: (a) poses a threat to the physical well-being of himself or any other student or staff member; (b) is causing and may continue to cause substantial interference with the educational process; (c) intentionally causes or attempts to cause substantial damage to school property or private property or steals or attempts to steal school property of substantial value; (d) knowingly possesses or transmits any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object on school grounds or at a school function; (e) knowingly possesses, uses, transmits, or is under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind; (f) repeatedly and/or intentionally defies the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators; (g) repeatedly and/or willfully violates the accepted rules and regulations of the Morris School.

In rare cases a teacher may encounter a child who is upset for any number of reasons and who is seriously disrupting a classroom. The only solution may be to have the child leave the classroom environment and stay at home for a short period of time or in school under close supervision. The responsibility for sending a child home for gross misbehavior, including classroom and building disruption, rests with the Principal. The decision is made after consultation with the classroom teacher, Head Teacher, and Special Needs personnel if the child is receiving special help.

In-School Suspension may be deemed an appropriate temporary action for a child who is seriously disrupting the educational setting or consistently misbehaving in any school area. The intent of In-School Suspension is to minimize out-of-school suspensions while maintaining a continuing program for students. Students will be required to perform schoolwork while in In-School Suspension. Such work will be assigned by the appropriate classroom and/or resource room teachers. The teacher or other adult in charge will initiate the procedure by consulting with the Head Teacher and the Principal. The parent will be informed of the decision for in-school suspension. The in-school suspension typically will be for a one to three day period.

The decision for a longer suspension, dependent on the nature and severity of the misbehavior, will be the duty of the Principal after consulting with the parents, all personnel directly involved with the child, and the Superintendent of Schools, if necessary. The Principal will determine the length of the suspension, will arrange for homework assignments, and will determine how the child will return to school.

4. Exclusion or Expulsion Procedures

Exclusion or expulsion is defined as that formal action voted by the School Committee, acting upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, which excludes a student from regular classroom instruction for any period of time exceeding ten (10) school days. To impose expulsion, the School Committee must find that: (a) the continued presence of the child in school would endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education; or, (b) the student violated school regulations as defined in the reasons for suspension at least three (3) times during one (1) school year and that each violation was serious enough, in the absence of other violations, to warrant suspension.

Expulsion or exclusion is a very serious disciplinary measure. It can be imposed only by the School Committee and only after the student has had full procedural protection.

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIORAL SITUATIONS AND POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

1. A child who misbehaves on the playground may be assigned any of a number of consequences depending on the individual circumstances. They may include separation from the other students to losing recess privileges to assisting the paraprofessionals as a playground monitor. Consequences for a child who is involved in continuous minor infractions of playground rules will be determined by the paraprofessional on duty in consultation with the Head Teacher.
2. A child who makes repeated aggressive or insulting comments towards another child (bullies) will be lose a privilege and will be directed to meet with the interventionist, guidance counselor or principal. During this meeting the appropriate staff member will inform the child of the nature of the infraction and discuss the impact of such behavior on the recipient of the comments. The child will be asked to process their behavior in writing or verbally and may be asked to write an apology or offer a face to face apology for their conduct. The parent will be contacted and informed of the behavior and intervention. The child and parent will be advised of subsequent consequences should the behavior be repeated.
3. A child who writes on walls, desks, or floors will clean all markings with soap and water.
4. A child who throws papers or food on floors or on the playground will pick up the area. Consequences will be assigned by the adult on duty.
5. A child who destroys a school book or workbook will be charged an appropriate replacement amount.
6. A child who takes or damages another person's property will make restitution. The decision for consequences for a child who continually takes the belongings of others will be made by the classroom teacher in consultation with the parent.
7. A child who is disruptive in the classroom will be disciplined by the classroom teacher dependent on the teacher's judgment of the severity of the disruption. The child may be sent to the office for a short time until the teacher and child may confer alone.
8. A child who continually violates school rules, especially those regarding the rights and property of others and those relating to the safety of other students or school personnel may lose the privilege of attending a school event or class field trip. The final decision rests with the Principal, normally after consultation with the interventionist, classroom teacher, and parents.
9. A child who refuses to complete an assigned task in the classroom may be kept in at recess or after school to finish the work if the teacher feels it is in the best interest of the child. Additional work may be assigned as a consequence for incomplete or untimely assignments. The teacher will call the parent in advance so that transportation can be provided. (Advance notice will vary according to availability of parent transportation and time needed to make arrangements).
10. A child who willfully breaks or damages school property will pay for the cost of repair or replacement. When this occurs in the classroom, the decision for consequences will be made by the teacher and/or the Principal or Head Teacher. Otherwise, the decision will be made by the Principal.

PROCEDURE FOR PARENTAL COMMUNICATION/APEAL WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL CONCERNING A DISCIPLINE PROBLEM

A parent who is concerned about disciplinary action taken against his/her child should follow this procedure:

(1) Contact the school and ***speaK with the staff member directly involved*** in making the decision for corrective action. Parents may contact staff members during the regular workday (8:30 am-3:15 pm for grades PreK-5). If a staff member is unable to take a telephone call, the call will be returned within 24 hours (i.e., by the next school day).

(2) If a parent contacts an administrator about a disciplinary problem, the administrator will check that the parent has first discussed the issue with the staff member involved. If the staff member has not been contacted, the administrator will inform the staff member about the call and ask the staff member to make contact with the parent.

(3) If this approach does not lead to resolution of the problem, an administrator may be asked to mediate.

(4) The proper channeling of concerns from parents is as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| a. Teacher or other staff member | c. Superintendent |
| b. Principal | d. School Committee |

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR BUS AND PLAYGROUND

SCHOOL BUS

Students should:

- .. be on time at the designated bus stop.
 - .. take care not to damage the property (lawn, shrubs, trees, house, etc.) at the bus stop.
 - .. stay off the road while waiting for the bus, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before approaching it, and refrain from crowding or pushing while boarding.
 - .. have written permission to leave the bus other than at home or school.
 - .. help look after the safety of small children.
- .. **follow instructions of the bus driver.**
 - .. be courteous and respectful to the bus driver and other students.
 - .. use acceptable language on the bus.
 - .. sit in the bus seat while the bus is in motion and refrain from changing seats.
 - .. respect the rights and property of others (clothing, books, lunches; bus seats, windows, etc.).
 - .. refrain from opening and closing windows and emergency doors.
 - .. refrain from eating or throwing food and wrappings on the bus or out of the bus windows.
 - .. allow other students to pass in the aisle without interference.
 - .. enter and leave the bus at designated stops in an orderly manner

The bus driver shall write up incidents of school bus misbehavior and give a copy directly to the student and follow it with a copy to the Principal. The Principal shall discuss the infraction with the student and his parents. If the Principal feels, after conferring with a representative of the bus company, that bus privileges for this child should be suspended for a period of time, he will make this decision and inform the bus contractor and the parent. The bus driver at no time shall put a child off the bus. He/she is obligated to transport the child either to his home or to school and then refer the incident to the Principal immediately.

PLAYGROUND RULES

Children must:

- .. include all children in games or other activities.**
- .. use the playground equipment with care and safety toward other children.**
- .. play fairly in all game activities without hurting or harming any person.**
- .. use the playground for fun and enjoyment.
- .. keep the playground free of food and papers.
- .. put all playground equipment away in the shed

- .. share the use of playground equipment and play areas with fellow students.
- .. report any disorderly conduct or emergency situations to the teacher paraprofessional at once.**
- .. play only in designated areas of the playground.
- .. be helpful and courteous to the paraprofessionals at all times.
- .. refrain from sharing snacks (for allergy and dietary reasons).

- .. use only whiffle balls, rubber balls, and plastic bats.
- .. not engage in violent or aggressive play (i.e., wrestling or king-of-the-hill type activity)**
- .. ask permission to retrieve any balls that go out of the playground.

- .. not throw rocks, wood chips, or snow.
- .. reenter the building from the playground only with the specific permission of the paraprofessional on duty.
- .. not bring items such as Game Boys, iPods, or other headset gear to recess.
- .. immediately and respectfully follow directions and guidelines from the adults on duty.**

Students have two recess periods a day when we use the playground and the adjoining athletic fields. Recess periods are supervised by paraprofessional and other staff. Students are expected to comply with the directions of recess supervisors and students who are unable to follow adult directions may have to sit out a portion of the recess.

Team sports have at times been problematic when arguments over teams, rules, or even what game to play consumes all the players and requires adult intervention. There have been times when team sports have suspended due to these issues. Currently team sports are allowed during recess but students are expected to play team sports aware of the following conditions:

1. Teams should be fair and decided quickly.
2. Rules should be followed.
3. Disagreements should be respectful and all players should be aware that name calling or insults following disagreements may cause the recess supervisor to end the game for that day.
4. Players are asked to inform a recess supervisor if they intend to play a team sport. All players should be aware that the recess supervisor may end a game at any time if play becomes unsafe, if teams refuse to let all students play, or if field conditions do not allow for team play. Arguing with the supervisor about this decision may lead to a loss of team play privilege.

INTERNET POLICY

Morris School has the ability to enhance our educational system via the use of technology and the Internet. Our goal in providing this service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication on a global scale. However, with this educational opportunity also comes responsibility on the part of the school district, educators, parents, and students alike.

POLICY

Morris School supports each family's right to decide whether or not their child will be permitted access to the Internet while at school. Thus, only children who have an annual signed parent/guardian consent form will be allowed access.

Students may only access the Internet when their teacher or other responsible school personnel have given them direct permission.

While students are on the Internet, they will be monitored directly by a teacher or other responsible school personnel.

Children are not permitted to use the Internet during indoor recess or when they are with non-school groups using the building (example: Girl Scouts, C.C.D...etc.)

Content filtering software has been installed to prevent access to offensive, inappropriate, illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, controversial, or dangerous information on the Internet. However, please be aware that such filtering is not 100 percent effective. There is always the possibility that a student may accidentally access inappropriate material. In the event of the above, students must inform their parents, a teacher, or other school personnel immediately.

All students (grades 2 and above) will receive training concerning Internet safety rules. This training will occur within the computer lab and be reinforced within individual classrooms.

Morris School does not grant e-mail privileges to students. If students have an e-mail account at home, they are not permitted to use it at school. Students are not allowed to send or receive personal e-mail at Morris School.

Students will be instructed to never give out personal information about others or themselves such as their name, password, address, telephone number, location of school, or any other personal information when they are on the Internet.

Participation in chat rooms is not allowed at Morris School.

Students should not respond to any online messages that are mean, or in any way make them feel uncomfortable. If students receive a message that makes them uncomfortable, they should tell their teachers and parents immediately.

Student safety, privacy, and the legal right to intellectual ownership are paramount. Thus, student names, digitized photos, video clips, audio clips, student written or art work or any other personal identifying information will not be allowed on the Internet (example: our school website) without proper written parental and student consent. In addition, it is Morris School's written policy that only a student's first name and no other identifying information be allowed on any student publication on the Internet.

Students must ask teacher permission before downloading files from the Internet. Some Internet files may contain viruses that can damage a computer.

Students are not allowed to participate in or register for any on-line contest while at school unless they have their parents and teacher's permission.

All projects involving collaboration on the Internet with other school systems, educators, or professionals will be conducted only with parental permission. All projects will be fully identified as to educational purpose, content, and duration.

School administrators have the right to review system use and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that students are using the network responsibly.

Students will obey all copyright laws regarding material retrieved online.

The district cannot be held accountable for information that is retrieved via the Internet by unsupervised students outside of the school setting. Thus, it is **strongly** recommended that filtering software be installed at home and direct parental supervision be present at all times when children are using the Internet at home or at a friend's house.

Students will be good online citizens and conduct themselves in a way that does not hurt other people or is against the law.

Students will be informed of their responsibility for ethical and proper behavior on the Internet. Failure to follow these rules for use may Internet Use may result in loss of network privileges.

MORE GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE A SAFE AND ORDERLY SCHOOL

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

There is a School Committee Policy regarding animals in the classrooms which must be followed before any animals are allowed in classrooms. If your son/daughter wishes to have an animal brought into school for instructional purposes, he/she should ask the classroom teacher several days in advance so that all procedures may be carried out in accordance with the policy. Procedures may include screening of student health profiles and notification of other classroom parents.

DRESS CODE

We do not have a specific dress code policy. The school does not deem a particular mode of dress inappropriate unless it is felt to be offensive to another child or adult at school (i.e. clothing that is disruptively provocative, displays sexually suggestive images/messages or messages considered to be inappropriate, hateful or biased.) Clothing that causes a disruption to the learning process or endangers the child's or some other person's health, welfare, or safety will also be prohibited in the school setting. Students are asked to remove hats upon entering the building.

TOYS, TOY WEAPONS AND KNIVES, ELECTRONIC DEVICES, MONEY AND VALUABLES TAKEN TO SCHOOL

Some items are simply not appropriate for school. While we recognize that children may be eager to share a new toy or electronic device with friends, these items can create significant interruption of the learning process.

We do not allow ipods, mp3 players or expensive cameras without specific permission. We cannot assume responsibility for any damage or loss that may occur. TekDecks, wacky bands, pokemon cards, bionicles, electronic equipment, and other objects identified by the Principal as disruptive to learning or inappropriate for school grounds may be confiscated and brought to the principal's office where parents may pick them up. Any item that is or resembles a weapon will be confiscated immediately (toy guns, swords, or pocket knives etc.)

We ask that children not bring large amounts of money or other valuable objects to school. We cannot assume responsibility for any damage or loss that may occur. When children bring money to school we ask that parents place the money in an envelope, include a note inside stating the reason for the money being sent, and include both the child's name and the teacher's name on the envelope.

CELL PHONES

We ask that students not bring cell phones to school. If a student is observed using a cell phone during the school day they will be asked to turn it off and put it away. If the student is observed a second time using a cell phone or if the student refuses to comply with adult directions regarding cell phone use, the device will be confiscated and may be picked up in person by the student's parent or guardian.

TELEPHONE USE

Students may not call home for non-emergency matters during the school day. Student calls home from classrooms for forgotten instruments, assignments, and sports equipment have become excessive and have begun to interrupt learning time in our classrooms. Additionally, when parents deliver these forgotten items, students may be prevented from feeling natural consequences and may be more likely to forget the item again next time. We strongly request that after-school arrangements be communicated to the classroom teacher with a note prior to the start of the school day. Teachers will be asked not to let students make phone calls from the classrooms under any circumstances. If teachers deem the matter urgent, students will be sent to the office to make a call.

SCHOOL MATERIALS AND PROPERTY

The School Committee through its professional staff has identified appropriate materials to achieve its educational objectives at each grade level. These materials are provided by the Lenox Public School System. Since the books and supplies are provided at public expense, it is expected that the children will be responsible for replacement of any materials that are lost or damaged beyond the reasonable ability to use the book or material during another school year.

Reimbursement is also expected in the event of damage to buildings, furniture, or equipment caused by misconduct or an act which a given child would reasonably be expected to avoid.

VISITORS

Parents are welcome to visit the school and their children's classrooms; but, as a courtesy to the teacher and to be certain that your visit will coincide with an activity that you would like to see, we ask that you contact the teacher in advance. All visitors to the school must enter through the main entrance and report to the main office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge. NEW FOR 2011-2012: School entrances shall remain locked during the school day and visitors will need to use the communication system at the main door to access the building.

From time to time, we receive requests to allow other visitors who may be school-age children, cousins, or friends from out of town to spend a day or even a week with us. We feel that this creates a burdensome responsibility for the elementary staff members and the administration. Therefore, we do not typically grant such requests.

BUILDING EVACUATION and OTHER EMERGENCY RESPONSE

To prepare for safe responses to unforeseen events, the Morris School follows a set of emergency response and crisis plans have been developed for a variety of situations.

Building Evacuation: From time to time the building is evacuated either for a practice drill or for an actual emergency. Students should become familiar with the evacuation instructions that are posted in every classroom. The signal for evacuating the building is a loud alarm that is used only for this purpose.

Site Evacuation: If the building is evacuated and conditions require that students be moved off site, buses will be mobilized and students will be transported to the gym at LMMHS. The emergency all call system will be used to contact parents and advise them as to pick-up directions and next steps.

Lock-down: Morris students practice this procedure to prepare for any situation (like a dangerous or threatening individual in the school) that would indicate a safety risk to students. During a lock-down students move to a secure part of their classroom and the door is locked.

Crisis and Tragic Loss: Morris school has a set of procedures in place to respond to the emotional needs of its students and staff in the event of a student death, parent death, death of a staff member, suicide, or another community crisis. The plan identifies a crisis team of administrators, counselors, and local support agencies who work together to assist affected community members through a difficult time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND OTHER DISTRICT POLICIES

The Lenox School Committee Policy Manual contains a number of policies which have direct pertinence to parents of elementary school students. Copies of the School Committee Policy Manual are located in each of the schools and at the Superintendent's Office and you are welcome to read these and other policies that are of particular interest to you.

The following policies specifically pertain at this level. Several of these are mentioned earlier in this handbook:

1. Animals in the Classroom (Policy IKJ)
2. Bus Stop Supervision (Policy EDCB)
3. Chapter 622 - "An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in the Public Schools" (Form JAA) **
4. Elementary Students: Assignment to Classes (Policy JBCCB)
5. Emergency Drills (Reg. EBBC)
6. Evaluation (Policy GBI)
7. Field Trips and Excursions (Policy IFCB)
8. Fund-Raising (Policy JKB)
9. Grade 1 Entrance Age (Policy JBBA)
10. Head Teacher Job Description (GBBAL)
11. Home or Hospital Tutoring (Reg. IDDC)
12. Instructional Program (Goals and Objectives) (Policy IB)
13. Kindergarten Entrance Age (Policy JBB)
14. Manuscript and Cursive Writing (Policy IDAA)
15. Non-Resident Students (Policy JBCB)
16. Parent-School Communication and Resolution of Public Complaints (Policy IHAD)
17. Policy for Determining Eligibility for Free Meals and Reduced Price Meals (Policy EEA)
18. Procedures for Reporting Instances of Child Abuse/Neglect (Policy LDAG)
19. Promotion and Retention of Elementary Students (Policy IHE)
20. Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education (Exhibit IDA)
21. Selection of Instructional Materials (Policy IFA)
22. Smoking in School Buildings and Non-School Work Sites (Employees and Visitors) (Policy EBK)
23. Statement of Assurance of Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Policy BAA)**
24. Student Conduct (Policy JCD/Reg. JCD)
25. Student Photographs (Policy JHF)
26. Student Records (Policy JR)
27. Student Transportation (Policy ED)
28. Student Transportation - Conduct on School Buses (Policy EDCB)
29. Title IX and Massachusetts 622 (Policy LDD)**
30. Transportation for Athletic or Extra-Curricular Activities and Events (Use of Private Vehicles) (Policy EDAAE)

** Items starred are printed in the September or October issues of the Principal's Newsletter.

PESTICIDE POLICY

Lenox Public Schools prohibits the use of pesticides indoors while students are on the property (ant traps are an exception to this policy and may be used according to the manufacturer's directions for use.) In addition, Lenox Public Schools must notify, in writing, students and their parents/legal guardians, and employees at least two work days before pesticides are used outdoors at school. Schools, which utilize pesticides inside the building must be closed for a minimum of five days both during and immediately after application. A *Notice of Pesticide Use*, which will be provided by the pesticide manufacturer, must be posted on the school bulletin board at least two days before pesticides will be used and for at least 72 hours following their use. Any questions with regard to pesticides use should be directed to your principal and or superintendent of schools (MGL 132B, 6C-6I.)

HUMAN SEXUALITY INSTRUCTION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Lenox School Committee has adopted a policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the Morris School, prior to any instruction involving human sexual education, we will send home a notice to all parents of students in the relevant grade level indicating when instruction will take place and noting a parent or guardian's right to review instructional materials.

Under Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, a parent may exempt his/her child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption, simply send a letter to the principal requesting an exemption for your child. No student who is exempted from this portion of the curriculum will be penalized. Teachers may provide an alternative assignment to students who are exempted. Parent resources are available in the library for those wishing to either augment or conduct the classes on their own with their children.

SECTION II
Lenox Public Schools
Common Code of Conduct (PK-12)

Dear Students and Parents,

This part of your school's Code of Conduct Handbook is called the "common" portion because the policies and processes contained herein are those which apply to all school students of all ages. We hope by publishing this section that all students and parents will see consistency as students matriculate through grade levels- from Morris Elementary School through senior year at LMMHS. If you ever have any questions regarding your Code of Conduct Handbook, please feel free to ask any administrator.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ed Costa, Superintendent

C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 38R was amended to require that all school districts conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees, volunteers, school transportation providers, and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children.

Pursuant to this law and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policy, the Lenox Public Schools shall also obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I) from the Criminal History Systems Board for any prospective employees or volunteers of the School District, prior to hiring the employee(s) or accepting individuals as volunteers. The Lenox Public Schools may also seek such information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education C.O.R.I. Advisory of February 17, 2003 states the following:

Direct and unmonitored contact with children means contact with a child when no other C.O.R.I. cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students.

C.O.R.I. information is not subject to the public records law and shall be kept in a secure location separate from personnel files for not more than three (3) years. School districts must obtain this information at least every three years during an individual's term of employment or service. Access to this information is restricted to only those individuals certified to receive such information.

For further information regarding the District's C.O.R.I. policy and procedure, please contact the Superintendent of Schools.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT of 2002:

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) enacted by the United States Congress took effect in 2002. This Act sets standards for student achievement in the areas of reading, math, testing, and school district accountability, and assists the federal, state and local governments in reviewing progress in those areas.

Starting with the 2002-2003 school year, state test results were reported to the public. This report includes student achievement in statewide tests, a comparison of students at the warning/failing, needs improvement, proficient, and advanced levels of academic achievement, high school graduation and drop-out rates, names of school identified for improvement, the professional qualifications of teachers, and the percentage of students not tested. School districts must also prepare annual reports for parents and the public on the academic achievement of all schools, both individually and combined, which will contain the same information as the state report. For further information on NCLB, please contact the Superintendent of Schools.

ACADEMIC HONESTY, CHEATING & PLAGIARISM

Cheating is to act dishonestly, to trick, mislead or fool. Plagiarism is taking from another his/her ideas, writings, etc., and passing them off as one's own. Any form of cheating or plagiarism is an act of dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. All parties involved in such dishonesty, including students who aid or abet, are in violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action. Cheating/Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Copying of another student's test paper or any other school assignment
2. Using material during a test which is not authorized by the person giving the test
3. Collaborating with another student during a test or other school assignment without teacher consent and once expectations are made clear by teacher.
4. Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test or other assignment
5. Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for one's self to take a test or complete an assignment
6. Bribing another person to obtain a test or other assignment that is to be administered
7. securing copies of a test or answers to a test or other assignment in advance of a test or assignment
8. Copying from print or electronic sources without proper citation (see Internet Rules and Guidelines).
9. Use of technology to share information (i.e. video phone, text messaging)

Consequences:

In addition to any or all of the "Possible Responses to Major Infractions" listed in the Code of Conduct, one of the following consequences will apply:

- 1) Failure of the course for the year if the cheating/plagiarism occurs on any major course requirement such as a term paper or final exam
- 2) Failure of the course for the quarter if the cheating/plagiarizing occurs on a major quarter assignment
- 3) A zero grade (to be averaged in as a zero) on that assignment if the cheating/plagiarism occurs on any other quarter assignment or homework assignment. Repeated offense(s) may result in failure of the course for the quarter.

Appeal Process:

The student involved may appeal the decision of the classroom teacher. The burden of proof to reverse the findings and/or decision of the teacher will be upon the student.

- 1) Appeals will be heard by an appeals board, annually appointed by the principal and comprised of three teachers representing different subject areas, the department chair of the teacher, and two student members. The student members will be selected from high school class officers and the high school Student Council.
- 2) The appeals process shall not exceed two weeks from the time the appeal is initiated (excepting school vacations). Where applicable the diploma will be withheld pending the decision.

STUDENT PROJECTS: GUIDELINES FOR PARENTAL ASSISTANCE

1. Know and understand the teacher's guidelines for the project's construction, the amount of parental assistance permitted and how the project will be graded. Recognize that they may be different from year to year and from teacher to teacher.
2. Avoid last minute pressure. Help your child to be aware of the deadlines and timetables established by the teacher for successful completion of the assigned project.
3. Help with transportation needs to the library, research site, the display site, and other places.
4. Ask questions. Can your child describe and explain his/her project to you? Do they know how their project will be graded? Can they tell you the next deadline date?
5. Encourage the student to take responsibility for his/her own learning. When your child asks you questions, help them to research the answers rather than providing the answers yourself.
6. Please provide encouragement and guidance, but make sure your children are the ones earning their grades. Allow them to do the project themselves. Everyone learns best by actually doing- and the quality of the learning experience will be greatly enhanced if the students do the work. The parents' role as coach and mentor to their child is always important and strongly encouraged, but the use and preparation of appropriate materials and the actual creation of the project are ultimately the student's sole responsibility.

RIGHT OF STUDENTS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Pursuant to *Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 82*, —the right of students to freedom of expression in the public schools of the Commonwealth shall not be abridged, provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. Freedom of expression shall include, without limitation, the rights and responsibilities of students, collectively and individually, (a) to express their views through speech and symbols, (b) to write, publish and disseminate their views, and (c) to assemble peaceably on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions.||

The Lenox Public Schools may regulate student speech and assembly based upon legitimate educational needs, including, but not limited to, the time, place, manner of student speech and assembly, and institute reasonable methods to insure non-interference with the learning process. Any assembly planned by students during regularly scheduled school hours shall be held only at a time and place approved in advance by the building Principal or his/her designee.

For the purpose of this section, the word —student|| shall mean any person attending a secondary school, and the word —school official|| shall mean any member or employee of the Lenox School Committee: —No expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school official shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students.

CONFISCATED PROPERTY

Parents must pick up student property that has been confiscated by and is in the possession of school officials, due to an infraction of the Discipline Policy, within 48 hours from the school office. The Lenox Public Schools will not be liable for any property not picked up by parents within 48 hours of notification.

DUE PROCESS

Due process procedures provide fairness to students in disciplinary matters. A student to be punished by office detention is entitled to a verbal or written notice of the violation and an opportunity to respond before detention is assigned. A 24-hour notice of detention will be given to the student and parent.

In cases of short-term suspension, a student is entitled to verbal or written notice of the violation, an explanation of the evidence against her/him, and the opportunity to present her/his side of the story to the Dean of Students. Notice of the reason for suspension and an opportunity to present her/his side of the story will occur before being asked to leave school grounds, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, another student, or her/himself, or clearly endangers the school environment. In this case, the notice and opportunity to speak will be provided within 48 hours (excluding weekends, holidays or school vacations.)

In cases of long-term suspension or expulsion, the student and parent shall receive written notice of the opportunity for a hearing. The student may have representation, present evidence, and witnesses at such hearing. If the principal expels a student, the hearing shall be before the principal. The student may appeal the decision of the principal to the superintendent within ten calendar days.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Anti-Terrorism Law – Making Threats:

Chapter 313 of the acts of 2002 specifies that any individual who willfully communicates a threat resulting in the evacuation or serious disruption of the school, school related event, or school transportation, shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for not less than 3 years, nor more than 20 years or imprisonment in the house of correction for not less than 6 months nor more than 2 ½ years or by fine of not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$50,000, or by both fine and imprisonment.

Prohibiting Disturbance of School or Public Meeting:

Chapter 272, Section 40. Whoever willfully interrupts or disturbs a school or other assembly of people met for a lawful purpose shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than one month or by a fine of not more than \$50; provided, however, that whoever, within one year after being twice convicted of a violation of this section, again violates the provisions of this section shall be punished by imprisonment for one month, and the sentence imposing such imprisonment shall not be suspended.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION RELATIVE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Code of Conduct. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students.

1. The IEP for every special needs student will indicate whether that student is expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the student's handicapping condition requires a modification. Any modification will be described in the IEP.
2. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a special needs student, and a record will be kept of such notices.
3. When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to ten days in a school year, a review of the IEP will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement or program. The TEAM will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and her/his handicapping condition and either:
 - a) design a modified program for the student, or

- b) write an amendment to provide for the delivery of special education services during a suspension exceeding ten (10) cumulative days and any needed modification of the IEP relative to discipline code expectations.

Section 1415 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) sets forth the following procedures with respect to the suspension of students with special needs. School personnel may order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 school days (to the extent that such alternatives would be applied to children without disabilities).

If a student with special needs is in possession of a weapon or illegal drugs, commits an assault against school personnel, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function, school personnel may order a change in placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for the same amount of time that a child without a disability would be subject to discipline, but not for more than 45 days.

When a student with a disability or suspected disability has been suspended or placed in an alternative setting for 10 days (cumulative), the IEP team will convene to conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment, including a Manifestation Determination, and will develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan that will be accepted by the IEP team. If the student has an existing behavioral intervention plan, the IEP team will review the plan and modify if necessary.

If an alternative educational setting is warranted, the placement will be determined by the IEP team. The placement will be selected so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general curriculum in another setting and will ensure the provision of those services and modifications described in the student's IEP that will enable the student to meet the goals set forth in the IEP.

In addition, the Department of Education will be notified, as required by law; and the procedures promulgated by the Department of Education for requesting approval of the alternative plan will follow.

HAZING - PENALTIES

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, §§ 17-19, and 603 CMR 33.00 states the following:

Section 17 Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term —hazing‖ as used in this section and in sections eighteen (18) and nineteen (19), shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conducts shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18 Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen (17) and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19 Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall deliver, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the Attorney General any such institution which fails to make such report.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the goal and policy of Lenox Public Schools to promote a workplace and learning environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of current or prospective employees, students, or others occurring in the workplace, in school, on school grounds, at school-related activities, or in other settings in which employees or students may find themselves in connection with their employment or education is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated, such action being regarded as a separate and distinct matter under this procedure. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace and learning environment free from sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated and we have provided a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with, if encountered by employees, students or others.

Because Lenox Public Schools takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we

will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and learning environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or learning environment conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

II. Definition of Sexual Harassment

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this: —sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or success as a student or as a basis for employment or education decisions;
- or,
- (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work and educational environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor or a teacher for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job or educational benefits such as favorable review or grades, salary increases, promotions or grade advancement, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work place or learning environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers or students may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

Unwelcome sexual advances--whether they involve physical touching or not; Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references, to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess; Displays of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons; Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;

Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and, Discussion of one's sexual activities.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

By definition, sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student. The Lenox Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations;

- a. A man, as well as a woman, may be the victim of sexual harassment, and a woman, as well as a man, may be the harasser.
- b. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. (S)he may also be an agent of the employer, or supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or, in some circumstances, even a non-employee (student, parent, or other).
- c. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- d. Sexual harassment includes any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is considered offensive and directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts at humor or the sexual harassment of one female (or male) employee may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or

education environment for another female (or male) or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

e. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances, which do not result in the loss of promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim, may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment where they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education, or create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.

All personnel will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and enforcing the above policy. All personnel are to adhere strictly to this policy and report any violations to their appropriate supervisor, or, if that person is the alleged harasser, then to another appropriate management person or the persons identified hereinafter.

III. Complaints of Sexual Harassment

A complaint shall be an accusation by an individual that there has been a violation of the Sexual Harassment Policy. If any of our employees, applicants, or students believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee, applicant, or student has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done verbally or in writing. Those authorized to receive complaints shall in the case of a verbal complaint complete the Lenox Public Schools Sexual Harassment Record of Contact form to the extent information is obtained from the complainant. Those submitting a written complaint are encouraged to use the Lenox Public Schools Sexual Harassment Report form. All matters involving complaints of sexual harassment will remain confidential to the extent practicable.

Persons who would like to file a complaint may do so by contacting any of the following:

Principal School Adjustment Counselor

Lenox Memorial Middle and High School Lenox Memorial Middle and High School

197 East Street 197 East Street

Lenox, MA 01240 Lenox, MA 01240

413-637-5560 413-637-5560

Principal School Adjustment Counselor

Morris Elementary School Morris Elementary School

129 West Street 129 West Street

Lenox, MA 01240 Lenox, MA 01240

413-637-5570 413-637-5570

Superintendent of Schools MIAA

6 Walker Street Employee Assistance Program

Lenox, MA 01240 800-451-1834

413-637-5550

These persons are also available to discuss any concerns and to provide information about the Lenox Public Schools' policy on sexual harassment and the complaint process.

IV. Complaint Process

When a complaint is received, the allegation will be promptly investigated in a fair and expeditious manner. At his/her discretion, the Superintendent of Schools shall designate a Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation. The Complaint Officer may be the Superintendent of Schools, the Principal of the Lenox Memorial and High School, the Principal of the Morris Elementary School or other person. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The person alleged to have committed the act of sexual harassment will also be interviewed.

Such investigation may also consist of, but may not be limited to, interview(s) with other employees or individuals at the discretion of the Complaint Officer, and review of pertinent records. When the investigation is complete, the Complaint Officer will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person(s) filing the complaint and the person(s) alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

The Complaint Officer will attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.

If the Complaint Officer determines that the allegations are not credible, the matter shall be closed. The school system shall keep the documents, notes and other material from the investigation as a record for an appropriate period of time. The purpose for retaining this record is to enable the school system to prove that an appropriate investigation was conducted and to provide a historical record for use in the event of a subsequent complaint.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by an employee(s), student(s) or others, action as is appropriate under the circumstances will be taken. Because of the private nature of certain incidents, particularly those involving sexual harassment, and the emotional and moral complexities surrounding such issues, effort will be made to resolve problems on an informal basis. When a complaint is resolved informally, only a short summary of the incident will be maintained on file. An admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of a verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and action taken to provide appropriate relief for the individual may be sufficient resolution. At this informal stage, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive and not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if the allegations involve conduct for which informal resolutions are not appropriate, the Complaint Officer may take action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment or expulsion from school, and may include other forms of remediation and disciplinary action as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. Remedial action will depend on the severity of the incidents. If the matter is not informally resolved, the Complaint Officer shall assemble the documents, notes, and other materials from the investigation as well as the Complaint Officer's determination of the complaint and action taken and submit them to the Superintendent of Schools. (If the Superintendent of Schools is the Complaint Officer, he/she shall do the same.) The school system shall keep the same as a record for an appropriate period of time and for submission to the School Committee in the event of an appeal.

V. Appeal

If the complainant(s) or alleged harasser(s) are not satisfied with the result of the investigation or remedial or disciplinary action, he/she/they may appeal for a hearing before the School Committee by filing a written appeal request with the Superintendent of Schools. Upon receiving an appeal request, the Superintendent of Schools will submit the documents, notes and other materials from the investigation as well as the Complaint Officer's determination of the complaint and action taken. The School Committee shall hold a hearing at which hearing the parties, with or without the assistance of legal counsel or other person, present evidence by examining and cross-examining witnesses and presenting other evidence.

After the hearing is completed, the School Committee shall render a written decision. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the School Committee's decision.

VII. State and Federal Remedies

In addition to the above, an employee(s) or student(s) who believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using the school district's complaint process does not prohibit an employee(s) or student(s) from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim:

(EEOC - 180 days; MCAD – 300 days)

1. The United States Equal Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
One Congress Street

10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
617-565-3200

2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

Boston Office
One Ashburton Place
Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
617-727-3990
Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street
Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103
413-739-2145

Legal Ref.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

The school or district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Lenox Public Schools, herein after referred to as the “district”, to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and visitors free from bullying, hazing, harassment, and intimidation. Such action may occur on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, genetics, disability, or for any other reason.
- B. It is the responsibility of every staff member, student, and parent to recognize acts of bullying and take appropriate action to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. It is additionally the responsibility of the school and district to record and keep data, monitoring the prevalence of bullying issues to assist in the biennial review.
- C. It is a violation of this policy for any staff member, or for any student to engage in bullying in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of bullying. All employees are mandated to report all cases of bullying, as required by this policy and state law.
Bullying is prohibited:
 - On school grounds,
 - On property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
 - At a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
 - At a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school.
 - Through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the internet)
 - At any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- D. This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school’s authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such bullying occurs out of school but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to or materially and substantially interferes with an employee’s work, personal life, a student’s school work, or participation in school-related opportunities or activities. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Reports of cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school, will be reviewed and, when a nexus to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber-bullying will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyber-bullying will not be re-admitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) attend such meeting.

- E. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying has the right to file a complaint and to receive prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any or all information received.
- F. The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of bullying.
- G. If an Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that a child has a disability which affects “social skills development” or the child is “vulnerable to bullying or teasing because of the child’s disability” the IEP shall address the skills/proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to these issues.

II. BULLYING DEFINITIONS

- A. “Bullying” means repeated, unwelcome, written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, by one or more individuals, directed at a target that (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at the school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of school. The behavior must interfere with an employee’s ability to perform his or her duties or with a student’s academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities or privileges: that are being offered through the school district; or during any education program or activity; or during any educational program or activity; or while on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school sponsored activities, or at school sanctioned events.
- B. “Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communication, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the clauses (i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of communicating to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the clauses (i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying.
 - 1. Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone, or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.
 - 2. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.
- C. “Hostile Environment”: means, a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule and/or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the condition of a student’s education.
- D. “Involvement”: If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.
- E. “Aggressor”: is a person(s) who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.
- F. “Target”: Is a person(s) against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been directed.

- G. "Reporter": The person who reports the act of bullying.
- H. "Retaliation": Is a form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment, directed against a person(s) who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or provides reliable information about bullying.
- I. "Staff": Includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff or paraprofessionals.
- J. "School Grounds": Is property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district for a school sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

III. GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING BULLYING OR RETALIATION

In school systems, bullying takes many forms and crosses many lines. The situation may be an instance of student to student, student to staff member, staff member to student, or staff member to staff member. Guidelines for dealing with any report of bullying are as follows:

- A. By law, bullying is defined by the target's perception in combination with objective standards or expectation. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as bullying by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the target or a Principal or designee to whom a complaint was made or reported make it clear to the aggressor that the behavior is objectionable.
- B. In all reports of bullying, the target, and or reporter, should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. Anonymous complaints of bullying or retaliation will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard. *The Bullying Reporting Form* (Appendix A) shall be completed. Reporting forms are available to all students and staff at each school as well as online on the Lenox Public Schools website.
- C. Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is an instigator/participant or a target of bullying, shall immediately report it to the Principal/Designee; each school shall document any prohibited incidents of bullying or cyber-bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals to the Superintendent's office as they occur. *The Bullying Reporting Form* shall be completed.
- D. A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L.c.258. As a result, the school district shall indemnify staff members from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of bullying or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection therewith.
- E. In a situation involving a report of *student to student* bullying that is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the Building Principal. The student must also complete the *Bullying Reporting Form*.
- F. In a situation involving a report of *staff member to student* bullying, it should be brought to the attention of any staff member, and that staff member shall notify the Building Principal immediately. The *Bullying Reporting Form* must be completed.
- G. In a situation involving a report of *student to staff member* bullying, the staff member shall notify the Building Principal.
- H. In a situation involving a report of *staff member to staff member* bullying the staff member shall notify the Building Principal.
- I. If the alleged aggressor is the person responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or School Committee shall designate an alternative bullying investigator.

- J. If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.
- K. If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement officials consistent with the provisions of state law.
- L. In all cases of alleged retaliation, the reporting and investigating procedures shall adhere to those procedures that apply to cases of alleged bullying.

IV. PROTOCOL FOR INVESTIGATING BULLYING CLAIMS

Once a report of bullying or retaliation has been made, including reports of mental, sexual, emotional, or physical harassment as well as threats to a person's safety, property, or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action shall be taken.

- A. The Building Principal /Designee shall promptly investigate the report through discussions with the individual(s) involved. The outcome shall be documented in the *Investigator's Report Form*. (Appendix B) In situations involving allegations against a staff member, he/she should be informed of his/her right to have a third party present at the time of the discussion. In situations involving allegations by one student against another student, the Principal/Designee should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teachers. Parents of both sides of this report will be informed of the situation and will be invited to participate in resolution discussions. It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit. The *Investigator's Report Form* shall specify the outcome.
- B. If the aggressor and target are willing to discuss the matter indicated in *the Investigator's Report Form*, in the presence of the Principal/Designee, a supportive faculty member and/or parent should be included in the discussion. During the discussion the offending behavior should be described by the target and the administration, a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop. If the circumstances do not permit a face-to-face meeting, the administration will present the target's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution meeting will result in appropriate discipline outlined in the *Student Handbook* and listed on the *Bullying Rubric* (Appendix D) and determined by the Building Principal. The matter shall be documented in the *Investigator's Report Form*.
- C. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the Building Principal/Designee determines that further, more formal investigation or additional disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:
 - 1. In instances involving *student to student or student to staff member* bullying, the student may be subject to discipline including but not limited to counseling, suspension, and, in appropriate cases, expulsion. Please refer to Appendix D for the full range of disciplinary actions that may be used by the school administration.
 - 2. In instances involving a *staff member to student and staff member to staff member* bullying, findings will be referred to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action may also be initiated at this point, up to and including discharge consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.
- D. Appropriate staff will be notified of the investigation and any follow-up, within limitations of applicable law.

V. GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES AND SAFETY PLANS

In an effort to provide the target, or other involved individuals such as reporters, witnesses or others, with a learning and working atmosphere where the target feels safe, and to prevent the re-occurrence of bullying, a target's *Safety Plan Form* will be developed to ensure these basic rights can be achieved. This Safety Plan will provide clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a target and assessing that target's need for protection. The Safety Plan can include change of schedule, locker, lunch period,

counseling, teacher notification, and a daily check in person. The Building Principal/Designee shall complete the *Safety Plan Form* and share it with the target, his/her parent(s) and appropriate school personnel in an efficient time frame (Refer to Appendix C.) In addition, the school will offer appropriate support services, education and or intervention services for targets, aggressors, and appropriate family members of the involved students. The school may consider current tools including, but not limited to, behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

VI. NOTIFICATIONS

1. TO OTHER INVOLVED PARTIES

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations

2. TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Building Principal shall determine when acts of bullying need to be reported to local law enforcement. School officials will coordinate with the Lenox Police Department to identify a police liaison for bullying cases.

VII. RETALIATION AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited. Any student or staff member who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

In any situation where relational and/or false accusations occur in any form against any person who has made or filed a complaint relating to bullying, reprisal is forbidden. If either action occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student. A referral to law enforcement may be made.

VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Reports of bullying should be kept confidential, consistent with necessary investigation procedures and legal restraints on the dissemination of information about students with the goal of protecting the target and stopping the behavior. This is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA.)

IX. SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIP

- A. **PARENT EDUCATION AND RESOURCES:** The Lenox Public Schools are committed to working collaboratively with families in order to ensure that we have a safe and supportive school community. In partnership with the Lenox Public Schools, parents share in the responsibility to (i) reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school plan; (ii) learn the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) reinforce proper online safety and cyber-bullying. To assist parents in this partnership, the Lenox Public Schools will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying and social curricula used by each school in the district. These programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, School Counsels, Special Education Advisory Council and any other appropriate community organizations.
- B. **NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS AND/OR GUARDIANS:** Each year the Lenox Public Schools will inform parents and guardians of the anti-bullying curricula that will be used in each of our schools. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber bullying and online safety. The Lenox Public Schools will send parents a written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the Lenox Public Schools' Internet Safety Policy. All notices and information will be made available to parents in hard copy and electronically on the Lenox Public Schools' website. The Lenox Public Schools are committed to supporting the diversity of our community and will offer this policy in other languages if needed by families.

Parents will be informed about each school's bullying prevention and intervention plan and trainings.

X. PREVENTION & TRAINING

- A.** The professional development of staff and training for students is a critical part of this policy. All staff and students will receive annual trainings on this policy. Newly hired staff shall be trained promptly on this policy and its procedures and will receive professional development as needed.
- B.** The content of professional development for this policy shall include, but not be limited to, (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.
- C.** Each school shall provide age-appropriate instruction at each grade level for all students on bullying prevention annually.
- D.** The school district shall update their bullying prevention and intervention plans biennially, in consultation with teachers, staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.
- E.** Specialized training for staff of students with special education IEPs and for students with special needs.

XI. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Lenox Public Schools, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, gender, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Nothing in this Plan prevents the Lenox Public Schools from taking action to remediate discrimination or bullying based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law or Lenox Public School Policies.

In addition, nothing in this Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Lenox Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71 37H or 37 H ½ , other applicable laws or school policies in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

For further information about these guidelines, or for help with bullying problems or any other form of bullying, consult a member of the administration.

LEGAL REFERENCES

1. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 703
2. Title IX of the 1972 U.S. Civil Rights Act.
3. Chapter 151B, Massachusetts General Laws
4. M.G.L. Chapter 76 § 5
5. M.G.L. Chapter 269 § 17, 18, 19
6. M.G.L. Chapter 71, §370, 82, 84 93
7. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
8. Mass Student Records Laws and Regulations
9. Senate 2404 Bill: An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools
10. MGL C71, S 370

Approved by School Committee: December 6, 2010; May 16, 2011.

CIVIL RIGHTS, HATE CRIMES, HARRASSEMENT, AND BIAS INCIDENTS

Civil rights violations occur when a person interferes by threats, intimidation or coercion with another person's enjoyment of rights guaranteed under the Massachusetts or United States constitutions. These rights include the right to attend school without being subjected to discrimination and also include an individual's right to attend school free from violence, threats of harm, intimidation or damage to his or her personal property.

Identification and Definitions of Prohibited Conduct

Unlawful Harassment

Harassment consists of unwelcome behavior of a verbal, written, or physical nature, which is either repeated or severe, and which creates a hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive school environment, or substantially interferes with a student's education (or a staff member's ability to work). Harassment is a form of discrimination. The types of harassment defined below consist of verbal, written, or physical contact that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance.
- Otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic opportunities.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other written, verbal, or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Sexual

Harassment can take two forms: *quid pro quo* and *hostile environment*: *Quid pro quo* (literally “this for that” but meaning something for something”) sexual harassment occurs when a school employee explicitly or implicitly conditions a student’s participation in an educational program or activity, or bases an educational decision on the student’s submission to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, whether or not the student submits to the conduct. *Hostile environment* sexual harassment occurs when unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature by another student, a school employee, or a third party are sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a student’s ability to participate or benefit from an educational program or activity or to create a hostile or abusive educational environment. A single incident, depending upon its severity, may constitute illegal harassment. Sexual harassment includes conduct that is also criminal in nature such as rape, sexual assault, and stalking and similar offenses.

Sexual Harassment can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature.
- Pressure or requests for sexual activity.
- Inappropriate touching, unwelcome leering, or sexual gestures.
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning (an individual employment or) a student’s educational status.
- Displaying any sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, photos, videos or films.
- Inquiries into an individual’s sexual experiences or activities.
- Spreading rumors about or rating other student’s sexual activity or performance.
- Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome.
- Any sexually motivated unwelcome advances, whether or not they involve physical touching.

Sexual harassment is prohibited regardless of the sex of the harasser. Sexual harassment may occur even if the harasser and the person being harassed are the same sex.

Harassment Based on Race or Color

Racial or color harassment can include unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of the person’s race or color, such as nicknames, emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on manner of speaking, and negative references to racial customs.

Harassment Based on Religion

Harassment on the basis of religion or creed is unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s religion or creed, such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious tradition, or religious clothing, or religious slurs or graffiti.

Harassment Based on National Origin

Harassment on the basis of national origin is unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s national origin, such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language, or ethnic slurs.

Harassment Based on Sexual Orientation

Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation is unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s actual or perceived sexual orientation, such as negative name-calling and imitation mannerisms.

Harassment Based on Disability

Disability harassment includes harassment based on a person’s disabling mental or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person’s disabling condition, such as imitating manner of speech or movement, or interference with necessary equipment.

Discrimination: Discrimination consists of actions taken against another person that treat him or her unequally because of race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or gender bias.

Civil Rights Violations: Civil rights violations occur when a person interferes by threats, intimidation or coercion with another person's enjoyment of rights guaranteed under the Massachusetts or United States constitutions. These rights include the right to attend school without being subjected to discrimination and also include an individual's right to attend school free from violence, threats of harm, intimidation or damage to his or her personal property.

Hate Crime: A hate crime is any crime in which the victim is targeted for physical assault, threat of bodily harm or intimidation, at least in part, because he or she is a member of a different race, color, religion, ethnic background, national origin, or sexual orientation from the offender or because he or she has a disability.

Bias Incident: A bias incident is any act, physical, written or verbal, which is directed at a person or property because of his or her actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or disability. A hate or bias incident may or may not rise to the level of a crime.

Reporting Violations

Any violation of this policy should be brought to the attention of the Principal. A student may also report violations of this policy to a teacher, nurse, or counselor who will in turn report the violation to the Principal. The principal will conduct an investigation and take appropriate action. Both formal and informal measures are available to resolve complaints of violations of this policy.

Consequences

Any student found to have engaged in harassment shall be subject to any or all of the "Possible Responses to Major Infractions" listed in the Code of Conduct. Any employee or other member of the school community found to have engaged in harassment shall be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to, warning, suspension, or termination subject to applicable procedural requirements. Depending upon the severity of the reported incident, the principal will determine if a report to law enforcement is required.

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts Law, G.L.c. 119 - 51A. Lenox Memorial shall comply with Massachusetts laws in reporting suspected cases of child abuse.

Protection from Reprisal and Retaliation

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of unlawful harassment or a civil rights violation will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grading, learning environment or work assignments. The school will discipline or take other appropriate action against any student, teacher or administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who reports an incident or alleged unlawful harassment and/or civil rights violation, or any person who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding, investigation or hearing relating to such report of unlawful harassment or civil rights violation. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, as well as any action taken to harm an individual because he or she made a report of unlawful harassment or civil rights violation.

Claims of unlawful harassment or a civil rights violation that are made in bad faith will subject the complainant to discipline.

FIREARMS AND DANGEROUS WEAPONS

Possession of a dangerous weapon, not limited to a gun, gun replica (starting gun, airsoft gun, pellet gun, etc.) or knife, on school property or when associated with or participating in any school-sponsored activity may result in expulsion or other disciplinary action. A variety of objects when used for the purpose of intimidation or injury will be considered as a weapon. A student who wishes to bring to school, for the purpose of display or other school-related reason, any item that may be considered as a weapon may do so only with the express written consent of the principal.

In accordance with Massachusetts law (SEC. 37L of C. 71), all school personnel shall report in writing to the Dean of Students or principal incidents involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity at any time.

The Dean of Students or principal shall file reports with the superintendent, who shall file them with the chief of police, Department of Children and Families, and school committee.

The student shall receive an assessment arranged by the superintendent, police chief, and the Department of Children and Families. The student shall be referred to counseling and be reassessed by those involved in the initial assessment upon conclusion of the counseling.

LOCKERS/DESKS/COMPUTERS/VEHICLES - SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

Teachers and other school officials are permitted to search a student and/or the student's possessions such as handbags, book bags, backpacks, etc., when there is reasonable *suspicion* that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Reasonable *suspicion* may include a school official's personal observation that the student possesses contraband material on school grounds or the school official's receipt of a report to that effect by a teacher, another school employee, a student, or some other reliable source. Lockers are considered school property and are subject to search by school officials at any time. A search will be limited to areas and objects that reasonably could be expected to contain the contraband material.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504 PLANS

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Lenox Public Schools affirm that no qualified handicapped person shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by the Lenox Public Schools.

The guidelines regarding special education are based on state and federal law. The state special education law sets procedures for identification and assessment of students with special needs. A student must receive a complete and comprehensive evaluation to determine if the student has a disability and is eligible for special education, which includes specialized instruction. If eligible, the evaluation(s) will assist in determining appropriate special education supports and services. Parents who have a concern about their child's development or have a suspicion about a possible disability may refer their child for an initial evaluation. Upon receipt of a request of an initial evaluation, the school district must send notice to the parent and must receive the parent's written consent to conduct the evaluation.

In Massachusetts, in order to be found eligible for special education, a student must demonstrate the presence of a disability that prevents the student from making effective progress in regular education and requires specially designed instruction or a related service in order to access the general curriculum. Areas of disability include autism, developmental delay, intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, physical or health impairment, communication, or specific learning disability. Although the state testing program, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is an evaluation, it is not part of the evaluation conducted to determine if the student requires special education.

Whenever a referral is made, parents are notified in writing. An evaluation or assessment will occur only after written parental consent. Following the evaluation period, parents and members of the evaluation team will meet to discuss the assessments and whether or not the student is eligible for special education. If services are required, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed. Parents then have the right to accept or reject the IEP (in part, or in full). If the parents disagree with the special education program proposed for their child, an appeal process is available.

Requests for further information, complaints or inquiries concerning either Section 504 or special education should be direct to:

Ms. Cynthia Dinan
Director of Student Services
Morris School
129 West Street
Lenox, MA 01240
(413) 637-5571

HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires school districts to immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they don't have the documents typically required for enrollment in their immediate possession. The appropriate guidance counselor will provide assistance to families in obtaining records from the prior school. A homeless student may also remain in their school of origin until the end of the school year in which they obtain housing. The school of origin is responsible for transportation until the end of the school year in which they obtain housing.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Massachusetts's Student Records Regulations permit the release of "directory" information without consent. Directory information includes data such as student's name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, major course of study, participation in officially recognized school activities, awards, honors, dates of attendance, and post high school plans.

In Lenox, such information is typically used in the newsletter, in press releases, in sports coverage in local newspapers, and as part of the college/university application process. We do not release phone numbers without consent. We also provide names and addresses to recognized groups supporting school activities such as PTO and booster clubs. You have the right to request that such information not be released without your prior consent. If you wish to make such a request, please do so in a note sent to the attention of the guidance office.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any action taken by the Lenox Public Schools in the application of this Disciplinary Policy shall be documented in the student's temporary cumulative record. Disclosure of this information without the prior written consent of the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the student if he/ she is fourteen (14) or older or a ninth grader is prohibited except as allowed by law.

STUDENT RECORDS and FERPA

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the School District to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to a student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and/or the student in accordance with the law, and yet be guarded as confidential information. Pursuant to state and federal statutes and regulations, no third party, other than authorized school or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education personnel, shall have access to information in or from an education record without the specific informed consent of the eligible student or the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), subject to certain exceptions. Court officers, health officials and authorized school personnel may have access to school records of the students without —the specific informed consent|| of the student or his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

These laws include the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), found at *20 U.S.C. § 1232g*, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), found at *20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.*, and *M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 34A, B, D, E, and H*, as well as the regulations promulgated under these statutes.

FERPA also allows disclosure of education records without the consent of parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or students to any school officials, including teachers, who have a legitimate educational interest in them; during lawsuits brought against the school by a student or against a student by the school; in the event of a health or safety emergency; and, among other exceptions, upon receipt of a Court Order or lawfully issued subpoena, or upon receipt of a request from a court or the Department of Youth Services for information regarding a student. Prior to compliance with the Court Order, subpoena, or request, the school shall notify

the eligible student or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the Court Order, subpoena, or request in such reasonable time that he/she may seek to have the process quashed. Other exceptions may be found by reviewing the statute.

In the case of a student, fourteen through seventeen (14-17) years of age, or of one who has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or either one acting separately, shall exercise these rights. Any student eighteen (18) years of age or older may exercise these rights alone.

This privacy protection also means that if parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or students wish transcripts or records forwarded to schools, colleges, or prospective employers, a written release must be delivered to the Principal of the school or the appropriate custodian of the student's school records.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students are guaranteed the right under state and federal law to inspect as well as seek addition to or deletion from all records which are kept or requested to be kept by the School Department concerning individual students. The term —education records|| is defined as records that are —directly related to a student|| and —maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.|| 20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(4)(A). They include the —student record|| – a student's transcript and any other recorded information which is identified by the student's name, as well as the —temporary record,|| which contains all other information such as evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff. A signed log is kept in each cumulative record for all students identifying all persons who have obtained access to the student record.

Under FERPA, certain records are excluded from the definition of —education records|| and are not subject to access by parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and other individuals. These records include personal notes kept by instructional and administrative staff in their own files, employee records, records kept by school law enforcement officers, and medical treatment records of students over the age of 18.

Complete copies of the state regulations concerning parent/legal guardian and student rights to education records may be obtained in the building Principal's office.

Public Notice – Public Directory Notice

The Lenox Public Schools may release the following information without prior consent: —a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors, and awards, and post-high school plans.||

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and eligible students have the right to request, in writing, that this information not be released without prior consent. This notice may also be included in the routine information letter the school publishes under 603 C.M.R. sec. 23.10(1).

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS: ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS

As required by *M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H*, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record, consisting of information concerning his/her child, including, but not limited to report cards and progress reports, the results of testing, notification of a referral for a special needs assessment, notification of enrollment in an English Language Learner program, absences, illnesses, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, or withdrawal

from school, in accordance with the following provisions:

1. A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:
 - a. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation.
 - b. the parent has been denied visitation.
 - c. the parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.
 - d. there is an order of a Probate and Family Court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
2. The school shall place in the student's record any documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to *603 CMR 23.07(5)(a)*.
3. In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the building Principal.
4. Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and in the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in *603 CMR 23.07(5)(a)*.
5. The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
6. Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to *M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H*, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LENOX SCHOOLS AND LENOX POLICE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Lenox Public Schools, the Lenox Police Department agree to work together to ensure a safe and secure school environment for all students, to fully uphold the laws regarding the illegal use of drugs, alcohol, weapons or violence and illegal behavior and to provide parents, teachers and other staff with confidence that there is a consistent, cooperative effort by appropriate officials to prevent crime in the Lenox Public School System.

The parties agree to share information about criminal or delinquent behavior in order to implement Ch. 71, Sections 37H, 37H ½ and 37L and to protect the school community from criminal acts.

This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to facilitate the professional, lawful and confidential exchange of information consistent with the rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, administrators and law enforcement officials.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONES

Pursuant to *Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94C, Section 325*, any person who violates the provisions of the law pertaining to the unauthorized manufacturing, distribution, dispensing or possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance while in or on, or within one thousand feet of the real property comprising a public or private elementary, vocational, or secondary school, whether or not in session, shall be punished by a term of imprisonment in the state prison for not less than two and one-half nor more than fifteen (15) years or by imprisonment in a jail or house of correction for not less than two nor more than two and one-half

years. No sentence imposed under the provisions of this section shall be for less than a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of two (2) years. A fine of not less than one thousand nor more than ten thousand dollars may be imposed but not in lieu of the mandatory minimum two (2) year term of imprisonment as established herein.

Lack of knowledge of school boundaries shall not be a defense to any person who violates the provisions of this section.

Suspension of a License to Operate a Motor Vehicle upon Conviction of Violation of the Controlled Substance Act

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, *Chapter 90, Section 20*, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles shall suspend, without hearing, the license or right to operate of a person who is convicted of a violation of any provision of *Chapter 94C*, provided, however, that the period of such suspension shall not exceed five (5) years; provided further, that any person so convicted who is under the age of eighteen (18) years or who is adjudged a delinquent child by reason of having violated any provision of *Chapter 94C*, and is not licensed to operate a motor vehicle shall, at the discretion of the presiding judge, not be so licensed for a period no later than when such person reaches the age of twenty-one (21) years.

CIVILITY POLICY

It is the intent of the Lenox Public Schools to promote respect, civility, and orderly conduct among District employees, parents, and the public. It is not the District's intent to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. The intent of this policy is to maintain, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, harassment-free environment for teachers, students, administrators, staff, parents, and other member of the community. The District encourages positive discussion and discourages volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions.

1. Expected Level of Behavior:
 - District personnel will treat parents and other members of the public with courtesy and respect.
 - Parents and other visitors will treat teachers, administrators, and other District employees with courtesy and respect.
2. Unacceptable and Disruptive Behavior:
 - Using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays of temper;
 - Threatening to do physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee, or student;
 - Abusive, threatening, or obscene letters, e-mail, or voice mail messages;
 - Any other behavior that disrupts the orderly operation of a school, classroom, extra-curricular school activity, and/or administrative function.

3. Parent Recourse:

Any parent who believes he or she has been subjected to unacceptable behavior on the part of any staff member should bring such behavior to the attention of the staff member's immediate supervisor, appropriate administrator, and/or the Superintendent of Schools.

4. Authority of School Personnel:

Any individual who acts in the following may be directed to leave school premises or School Committee premises by a school principal or assistant principal, or their designee, any school administrator, including the Superintendent of Schools, and school security personnel. If the person refuses to leave the premises as directed, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement and request that law enforcement personnel take such action as they deem necessary:

- Disrupts or threatens to disrupt school or school district operations;
- Threatens or attempts to do or does physical harm to District personnel, students or others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;
- Threatens the health or safety of students, District personnel, or others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;

- Intentionally causes damage to District property or the property of others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;
- Uses offensive language; or
- Comes onto school premises without authorization.

Should an individual persist in violating the terms of this policy, the District may limit and restrict the methods of communication which may be used by said individual.

In the event that there is a serious threat of harm to student(s) or school personnel, the administration may obtain an Order of No Trespass prohibiting the individual making said threat from entering on District property.

5. Authority to Deal with Persons who are Verbally Abusive to School Personnel:

- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a loud, demanding, insulting, and/or demeaning manner, the employee to whom the remarks are addressed shall calmly and politely warn the speaker to communicate civilly.
- If the verbal abuse continues, the employee may, after giving appropriate notice to the speaker, terminate the meeting, conference, or telephone conversation.
- If the meeting or conference is on school premises, any employee may request that an administrator or other authorized person direct the speaker to promptly leave the premises.
- If the person refuses to leave, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement and request that law enforcement personnel take such action as is deemed necessary. If the employee is threatened with personal harm, he or she may contact law enforcement.

FIELD TRIPS

The School Committee recognizes that the first-hand learning experiences provided by field trips are an effective means of learning. Therefore, the Committee shall encourage field trips which provide worthwhile educational experiences and complement the educational program.

However, the School Committee reserves the right to cancel any field trip up to the time of departure if it feels that the safety or health of the participants might be jeopardized.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for pupils to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in providing field trips: (a) value of the activity to the particular class group or class groups; (b) relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction or educational program; (c) suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level; (d) mode and availability of transportation; (e) the opportunities for all students to participate; and (f) cost.

Definitions

Any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district for students of the school district shall be considered as a field trip or excursion unless the employee can establish to the satisfaction of the Principal that the school district is in no way responsible for such trip.

- (a) A field trip shall be construed to mean any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district as an integral part of the school program where students investigate or participate in real or lifelike experiences away from the classroom. Examples include class trips to the theater, to historic sites, or to nature centers. All field trips will be scheduled based upon the educational value to the students. There are two categories of field trips:
 1. Local (during school day)
 2. Extended (requires time before and/or after school day)
- (b) An excursion shall be construed to mean any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district as a supplement to the school program. Examples include trips by school sponsored clubs, student exchange programs, and trips planned through the school for special interest groups outside of school hours.

Charges to Students

1. Local Field Trips: It is the School Committee's goal that there be no cost to students participating in local field trips. The school system will pay for transportation costs and will attempt to pay all admission charges. With the advance approval of the Principal, the Committee will allow a nominal fee (e.g. admission, meals, etc.) for such trips if they would otherwise be impossible to arrange. In such cases, the Principal shall seek other funds before approving any charge to students.
2. Extended Field Trips: The Committee recognizes that extended field trips (e.g., to Boston or New York City) will often require that students pay a share of the cost. These trips are to be planned well in advance so that parents and students are aware of the cost involved. Moreover, the Principal shall endeavor to reflect such trips in the budget planning process on an annual basis. As with local field trips, the school system will endeavor to pay for transportation and attempt to pay for admission charges. To cover any remaining balance for the cost of the trip, the Principal may approve a charge to students provided the charge is kept within reasonable limits. Further, the School Committee's expectation is that under normal circumstances students will not be asked to pay such a charge more than once annually.

The following regulations will apply to all extended field trips:

A. Trip Approval Process

1. Advance approval by the School Committee is required for any student trip involving late night, overnight, or out of state travel.
2. The approval process will be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip.
3. Overnight trips will offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips will be appropriate for the grade level.
4. Teachers and other school staff will be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process will apply only to school-sanctioned trips; School Committees will not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.
5. Policies and procedures for trip approval should take into account all logistical details involving transportation, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.

B. Transportation

1. The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should be avoided. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches.
2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will involve pre-trip checks of companies, drivers and vehicles.
3. School officials will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory." FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.safersys.org>.
4. Districts that are unable to conduct their own in-depth reviews of bus carrier qualifications may elect to use ratings and pre-qualifications established by other public entities, such as the Department of Defense's approval list of motor carriers for troop transport (<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>).
5. The contract with the carrier should prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verifications of the subcontractor's qualifications.

C. Trip Scheduling

1. Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, the trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.
2. Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered “optional school programs” and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department’s Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students’ schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
3. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.
4. Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.
5. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.
6. No field trips will be scheduled during the first week of the school year.

D. Fundraising

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students’ obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.
3. If students are charged individual fees for participation, the district should make every effort to provide scholarships where needed.
4. The Walker Fund will be considered for individual students.

E. Student Supervision

1. Students shall be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a CORI check in accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 38R.
2. CORI checks are recommended but not required by law for bus drivers who do not regularly work for the school district and who will not have direct and unmonitored contact with students. If such check cannot be done, a chaperone must always be present whenever students are on the bus.
3. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form. Such form shall include appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication.
4. The issue of payment for costs, if any, associated with chaperones shall be disclosed in detail in the application for approval of said field trip.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY, 603 CMR 26.00

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition

A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

Reasonable Modification

The district shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Communications

The district shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the district shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the district. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the district shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services

"Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Modification

The district is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the district shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. The decision shall be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

Notice

The district shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American With Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the district. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the projections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

Compliance Coordinator

The district shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The district shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements.

Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified handicapped persons should be in the mainstream of life in school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap.
3. For all handicapped persons in the Lenox Public Schools for whom there is an individual educational plan as per the requirements of State Law 71B (Chapter 766) and Public Law 94-142 the appeals procedure provided by those laws through the Division of Special Education of the Massachusetts Department of Education will be used.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992

CHILD ABUSE

It shall be the policy of the Lenox School District to report all cases of suspected child abuse consistent with *M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A* (see language from Section 51A, following). All employees are to report any suspected child abuse to their building Principal or immediate administrator. All administrators must file any suspected child abuse with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Children and Families: (413) 452-3200, and inform the Superintendent of Schools.

The following is selected from the *Massachusetts General Laws of Chapter 119: Section 51A*:

—Any physician... public or private school teacher, educational administrator, guidance or family counselor, day care worker or any person paid to care for or work with a child in any public or private facility, or home or program funded by the commonwealth... school attendance officer... clinical social worker... to supervise, educate, coach, train or counsel a child on a regular basis...

...who, in his professional capacity shall have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition, or who is determined to be physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth, shall immediately report such condition to the department by oral communication and by making a written report within forty-eight hours after such oral communication; provided, however, that whenever such person so required to report is a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school or facility, he shall immediately either notify the department or notify the person in charge of such institution, school or facility, or that person's designated agent, whereupon such person in charge or his said agent shall then become responsible to make the report in the manner required by this section.

Any such person so required to make such oral and written reports who fails to do so shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. Any person who knowingly files a report of child abuse that is frivolous shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Said reports shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his parents or other person responsible for

his care, if known; the child's age; the child's sex; the nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect; the circumstances under which the person required to report first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the child; the name of the person or persons making such report; and any other information which the person reporting believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries; the identity of the person or persons responsible therefore; and such other information as shall be required by the department.

Any person required to report under this section who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of any of the conditions listed in said paragraph shall report said death to the department and to the district attorney for the county in which such death occurred and to the medical examiners as required by section six of chapter thirty-eight. Any such person who fails to make such a report shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

No person so required to report shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of such report. No other person making such report shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of such report if it was made in good faith; provided, however, that such person did not perpetrate or inflict said abuse or cause said neglect. Any person making such report who, in the determination of the department or the district attorney may have perpetrated or inflicted said abuse or cause said neglect, may be liable in a civil or criminal action.

No employer of those persons required to report pursuant to this section shall discharge, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against, any person who in good faith makes such a report, testifies or is about to testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. Any such employer who discharges, discriminates or retaliates against such a person shall be liable to such person for treble damages, costs and attorney's fees. Within sixty days of the receipt of a report by the department from any person required to report, the department shall notify such person, in writing, of its determination of the nature, extent and cause or causes of the injuries to the child, and the social services that the department intends to provide to the child or his family.¶

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

This notification is required by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act [“AHERA”], 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substance Control Act.

Asbestos Management Plans have been developed and are available for the following buildings currently in use by the Lenox Public Schools:

1. Morris Elementary School, 129 West Street, Lenox, MA 01240
2. LMMHS, 197 East Street, Lenox, MA 01240
3. District Office, 6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01240

These plans are available and accessible to the public for review at these locations.

Mr. Jeffrey Ano at LMMHS, 197 East Street, Lenox, MA 01240 [413-637-5560] has been designated as the District’s Designated Person under AHERA.

A 3-Year Asbestos Re-inspection Report was recently completed and is available for review as part of the Asbestos Management Plan. No other asbestos-related activities are currently planned or in progress for the upcoming school year

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

Lenox Public Schools realizes the increased frequency of life-threatening allergies (LTA) among students. It is imperative that parents notify school administration regarding allergies and health issues with their children. Upon notification of a student with life-threatening allergies by a parent/guardian, with documentation from a physician, the school will follow the six identified areas of care as identified below:

I. Annual Procedures

1. The principal will take all necessary steps to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to Lenox Students including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) The parents, principal, school nurse, and teacher will communicate prior to the start of the school year to discuss the student's allergies and how best to provide a decreased risk environment.
- b) The school will develop a Food Allergy Action Plan on behalf of the student which will be reviewed and practiced twice during the school year. The first review will occur during the first month of school.
2. The parents will assist the principal by providing the administration with materials about these allergies from their physician.
3. The school nurse will develop a Food Allergy Action Plan which will be signed by both the parent/guardian and the principal. The school nurse will also provide awareness training for all school personnel on life threatening allergies during the first month of school. Classroom teachers of students with LTA in their classrooms will be trained prior to the students' first day of school. The remainder of the staff will be trained before the end of the first quarter.
4. The school nurse will provide information to students in classrooms with LTA students about allergies prior to the end of September.
5. A Food Allergy Action Plan will be disseminated, with the parents' permission, to the appropriate staff. The Food Allergy Action Plan must delineate the following:
 - a) Prescribed medications and personnel responsible for administering them;
 - b) Prescribed indications for administering medication (i.e., immediately upon contact with allergen or only if the Student begins to demonstrate signs/symptoms of exposure);
 - c) Instructions for activating the emergency medical system (and school nurse if off site); and
 - d) Instructions for contacting the Student's parent(s) and physician.

II. Daily Procedures:

1. The Food Allergy Action Plan for a student will be active on a daily basis.
2. The teacher will communicate immediately with the nurse and office in the event of an emergency.
3. The school nurse will carry a stock Epi-pen that will go with the nurse during all school evacuations.
4. The school nurse will have a supply of Epi-Pens in the nurse's office and in an unlocked safe area if needed.

III. Classroom Procedures:

1. All classroom faculty and staff will follow the procedures in the student's Food Allergy Action Plan every day.
2. Class projects will avoid known allergens.
3. The teacher and/or principal will send out reminder notes periodically on food safety rules and encourage non-food celebrations.
4. The School district, as well as the student's classroom will maintain the policy of no food-sharing.
5. The art teacher and/or classroom teacher will ensure that if food containers are used in class, all new product containers will be washed with soap and hot water prior to being used. Art supplies will be monitored for allergen content.

IV. Snacks, Lunches and Foods:

1. Students will be encouraged to wash hands before and after lunch and snack.
2. The cafeteria staff will ensure that tables and chairs are cleaned before and after lunch.
3. A policy of no trading or sharing food or snacks will be enforced district-wide.
4. If a food item is necessary to the project, the teacher will review the project with the Student's parents at least two days prior to the project to ensure that the food items are safe for the Student.

V. Field Trips:

1. This LTA policy extends beyond school grounds to include school-sponsored class trips. Students will not be permitted to eat on the bus; and bagged snacks will be kept in a closed container until snack/lunch time.
2. The teacher and nurse will ensure that a site-specific emergency plan is developed for each field trip.
3. The teacher will carry a cell phone on all field trips.
4. A designated staff person will be appointed and responsible for the supervision of the Student during the entire field trip.
5. The school nurse will delegate an epi pen to the staff person responsible for the supervision of the LTA student.

VI. Substitute Teachers:

1. The Student's teacher will prepare a substitute file containing a copy of the Student's Food Allergy Action Plan, to be placed in a specific location in the classroom that is known to the nurse, principal, and teachers in adjacent classrooms.
2. In the event that a substitute teacher is assigned to the class, the principal will notify the nurse.
3. The nurse and/or principal will ensure that there is a trained designated staff person either in the Student's classroom or adjacent classroom at all times when a substitute teacher is assigned to the Student's class.

FIRST AID POLICY

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, properly trained school personnel, if available, will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician or emergency services personnel.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home, to a physician or to a medical facility. First aid does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
3. No young child who is ill or injured will be sent home alone, nor will any older child unless the illness or injury is minor. A young child who is ill or injured will not be taken home unless it is known that someone is there to receive him/her.
4. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or Principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent/guardian or guardian in advance if at all possible.
5. The teacher or other staff member who is responsible for supervising a child at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.

6. All accidents resulting in serious injuries to students or staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

NCLB TITLE 1 “RIGHT TO KNOW” COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The Lenox Public Schools, in accordance with No Child Left Behind, hereby informs all parents that they have the right to know the following information regarding their child’s classroom teacher(s):

- a. Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he/she teaches
- b. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances
- c. The teacher’s college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree
- d. Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

The Lenox Schools, in compliance with federal law, will provide you with the above information in a timely manner, if you request it in writing.

PEST MANAGEMENT & PESTICIDES POLICY

The Lenox Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.

Pesticides:

Lenox Public Schools prohibits the use of pesticides indoors while students are on the property (ant traps are an exception to this policy and may be used according to the manufacturer’s directions for use.) In addition, Lenox Public Schools must notify, in writing, students and their parents/legal guardians, and employees at least two work days before pesticides are used outdoors at school. Schools, which utilize pesticides inside the building, must be closed for a minimum of five days both during and immediately after application. A *Notice of Pesticide Use*, which will be provided by the pesticide manufacturer, must be posted on the school bulletin board at least two days before pesticides will be used and for at least 72 hours following their use. Any questions with regard to pesticides use should be directed to your principal and or superintendent of schools (MGL 132B, 6C-6I.)

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY 603 CMR 46.00

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the Lenox Public Schools. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from immediate, serious, physical harm; and
- To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

The following definitions appear at 603 CMR46.02:

- Extended Restraint: A physical restraint the duration of which is longer than twenty (20) minutes.
- Physical Escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.
- Physical Restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student’s freedom of movement.

The use of mechanical or chemical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent/guardian. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in public education programs.

Mechanical restraint – The use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of his or her body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician shall not be considered a mechanical restraint.

Seclusion restraint – Physically confining a student alone in a room or limited space without access to school staff. The use of “Time out” procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered “seclusion restraint”.

Chemical restraint – The administration of medication for the purpose of restraint.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint, which the Department of Education recommends be at least 16 hours in length. Only school personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR46.00 shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of physical restraint shall be administered in the presence of at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. A person administering physical restraint shall only use the amount of force necessary to protect the student from injury or harm.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school’s physical restraint policy. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student’s refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats **that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.**

A member of the School Committee or any teacher or any employees or agent of the School Committee shall not be precluded from using such reasonable force as is necessary to protect pupils, other persons or themselves from an assault by a pupil.

The program staff shall report the use of physical restraint that lasts longer than five minutes, or results in injury to a student or staff member. The staff member shall inform the administration of the physical restraint as soon as possible, and by written report, no later than the next school day. The Principal or Director or his/her designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which, upon request, shall be made available to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

When a restraint has resulted in serious injury to a student or program staff member, or when an extended restraint has been administered, the program shall provide a copy of the required report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education within five (5) school working days of the administration of the restraint.

In special circumstances waivers may be sought from parents/guardians either through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process or from parents/guardians of students who present a high risk of frequent, dangerous behavior that may frequent the use of restraint.

SECURITY

Door buzzers and locks have been installed in our school front doors. This is in accordance with Homeland Security Agency recommendations to lock school doors during school hours. All parents and guests may gain entry to our schools by simply ringing the door buzzer at the front door.

SAFE SCHOOLS HOT-LINE

637-0868

24 hours a day

Call this anonymous, recorded line if you know of unsafe school issues or violence.